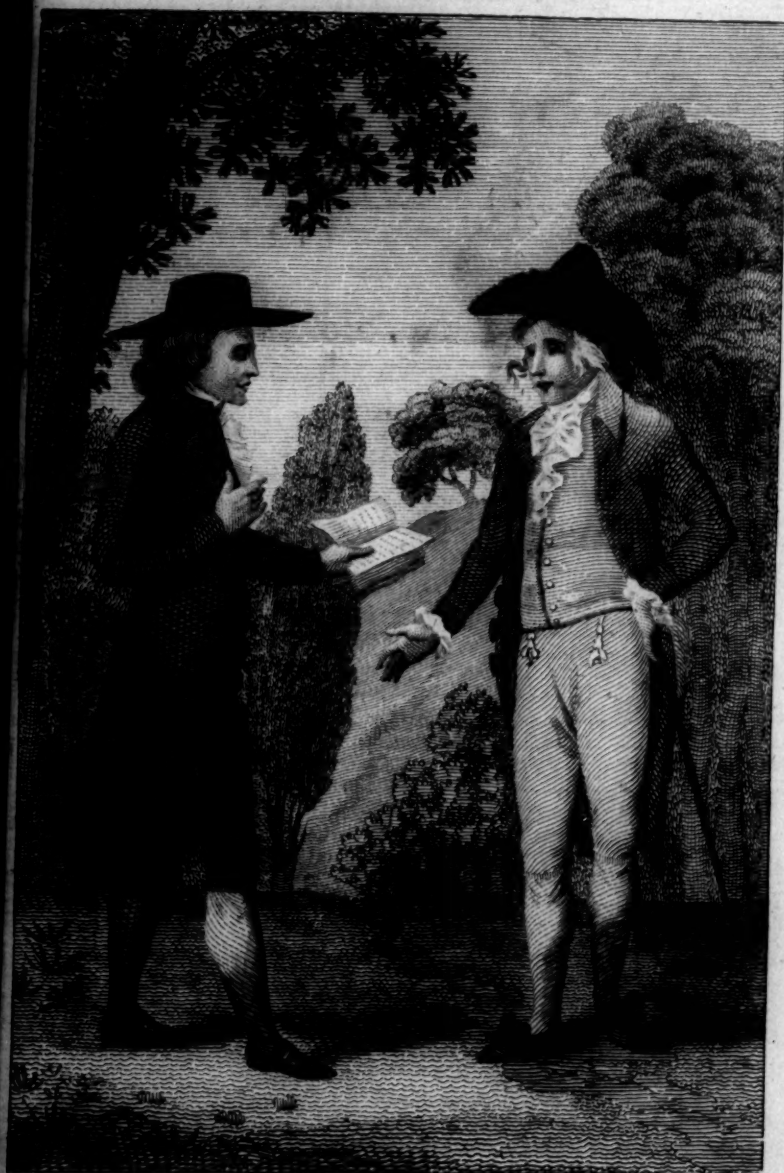


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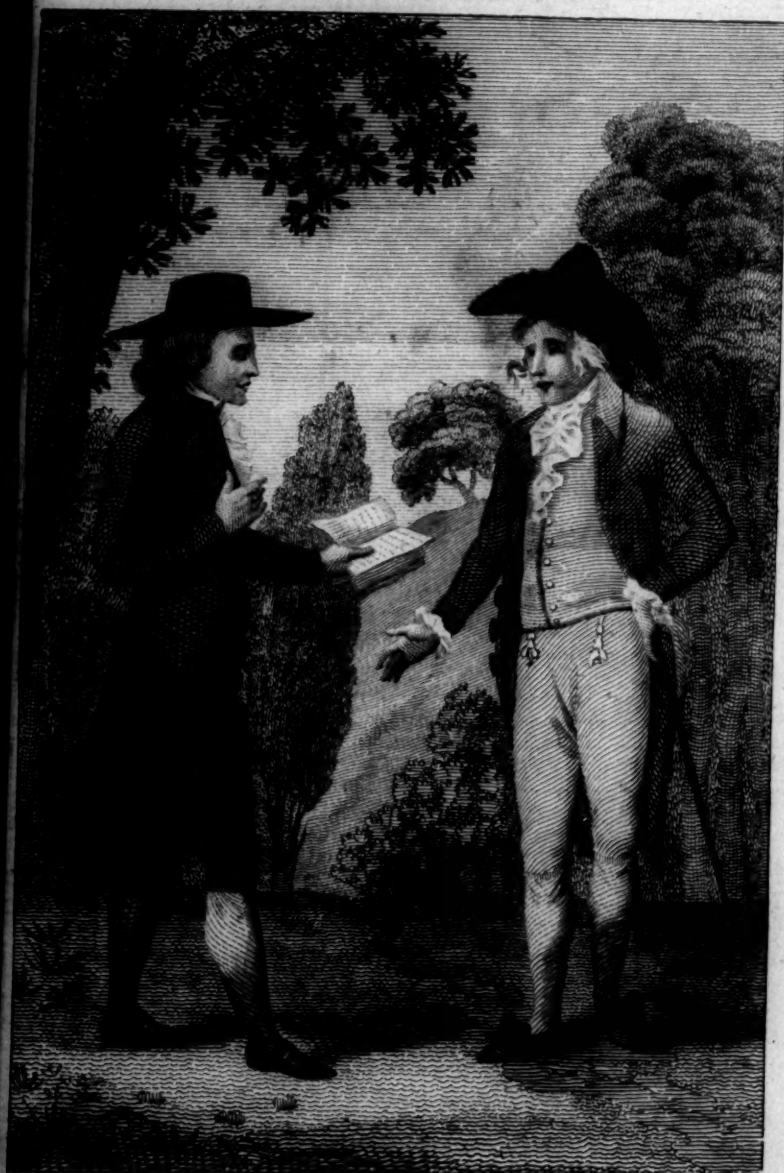


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Paternoster Row, London.

Ye cannot serve God & Mammon.

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MISCELLANEOUS
E S S A Y S,
DIVINE and MORAL.

DESIGNED TO
DISCOURAGE VICE;
AND TO
PROMOTE VIRTUE.

THE THIRD EDITION, WITH ADDITIONS.

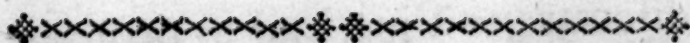
By JOHN FALLOWFIELD, *K*
Of SOUTHERNBY, in the Parish of CASTLE-SOWERBY,
CUMBERLAND.



C A R L I S L E :

Printed by M. DENNISON and SON, at
SHAKESPEARE'S-HEAD, *Scotch-street.*—1790.





P R E F A C E.

BELOVED Children, finding that my health was greatly impaired before I retired from business, it behoved me to study its preservation, which I was sensible could not be repaired, but by open air and rural amusements ;—therefore, at leisure hours, I thought proper to compose the following **ESSAYS** and **MISCELLANEOUS** pieces, purposely for your edification ; which I have made as short as possible, in order for their better retention.—My sole design, in these compositions, was to

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discourage Vice, and to promote Virtue.—The instruction of youth being a matter of the greatest consequence, how heavy then must that charge lay upon parents ! what bad examples are frequently seen for want of that instruction ! What a shocking sentence was pronounced upon old ELI, for that neglect ! When impiety and wickedness are evidently seen daily increasing, it becometh all good men to endeavour to put a stop thereto. How strenuous has our gracious Sovereign been in exerting his prerogative, for the better observation of the *Lord's Day*, and the checking of vice and immorality ! And what a worthy character does that gentle-

man bear who was the first promoter of *Sunday Schools* ! If my weak endeavours have answered any purpose, for your better instruction, I have only exerted the talent given me, and even fallen short of my duty.—May the God of Grace enable you, not only to read, but to practice these lessons of morality. A legacy (in my eyes) far exceeding all others to be left you by your earthly Father,

J. F.

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ESSAYS,

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ESSAYS, &c.

RELIGION.

RELIGION being a worship due to the Deity for our creation and preservation, which all nations on earth by some image, custom, form, or manner, adore; it pleased the Supreme Being to give his favourite people the Jews, an excellent code of laws for their better government, as well as a great number of rites and ceremonies also, which they were strictly commanded to perform; but, in length of time, not only their laws, but also their rites and ceremonies, were so deviated from, or corrupted, that at the fullness of time our blessed Redeemer appeared on earth, in order to renew the covenant, and institute a better code of laws, not by annihilating the old law, but by improving and amending it where deficient, which is called the *Gospel*, which was sealed with his blood, and which was divulged over all the world by
A his

2 MISCELLANEOUS ESSAYS,

his Apostles, in order for mankind to embrace. How happy must that nation be, who hath embraced, and holdeth fast that heavenly form of doctrine, so far excelling all others, that there is no name under Heaven whereby we can be saved but the name of the Lord JESUS CHRIST:

Let us then, who have embraced Christianity, hold fast our profession without wavering or dissimulation; let us not only peruse the gospel precepts, but practice them; for he inviteth all mankind to come to him, to take his yoke upon them, and then they shall find rest to their souls; for he is faithful that promised.

II. CHRISTMAS - DAY.

CHRISTMAS-DAY being kept on the twenty-fifth of December, in memory of the nativity of JESUS CHRIST, ought to be held in great reverence by *Christians*, as there is not a festival in the church equal to it. For as the joy in heaven, on the morning of that day, was ushered in to the shepherds by a multitude of the heavenly host, singing hallelujahs to God in the highest

highest degree, and to the earth peace, and good will toward men; how great then should our thanksgiving and joy be to him, when it was so celebrated by the heavenly host, and all for the benefit of sinful mortals! But how much to the reverse, do many act when they revel out their Christmas in the greatest luxuries and extravagancies? and instead of making it a holy season, as directed by our church, it may be properly called the most debauched season of the year.

Let us, my children, lay aside all pleasures and follies, so much practised amongst us at that season, and let us strive to keep that solemnity with more awful regard, by observing the precepts of the holy gospel, and living more peaceably one with another; then we need not fear but that after this frail life is ended, we shall have our everlasting abode in the mansions of bliss and happiness, with our blessed Redeemer, the *Prince of Peace*.

III. *GOOD-FRIDAY, or the CRUCIFIXION of our SAVIOUR.*

GOOD-FRIDAY, being the day on which the immaculate Lamb of God

4 MISCELLANEOUS ESSAYS,

suffered the most ignominious *Death*; for the sins of the whole *world*, ought to be kept in great reverence by all Christians, with the most fervent devotion, and most grateful affection. Let us but consider what destruction mankind had brought on themselves by their heinous offences, and transgressions, so great indeed, that no atonement could be made, but by the only *Sacrifice* of the Son of God. How astonishing is this scene of beneficence and love, in the infinite mercy of God, by ordaining such means of grace for fallen man. And how condescending in the son, to leave the realms of *Glory*, and submit to human infirmities, as well as the most excruciating tortures of the most painful and lingering *Death*, a punishment only due to the vilest *Malefactors*; all which he freely suffered in order to deliver mankind from the dominion of *Sin* and *Satan*.

O goodness ineffable, and inconceivable! we are lost in the thought of this great condescension of the blessed Son of God. If our eyes were fountains, we could not weep enough for the sufferings he endured, purely to conquer those dreadful impieties that the wiles of the Devil, the world and

the flesh, had subjected us to. Let us be grateful then, and imitate as far as we are able, the exemplary life and instruction given us, by this great *captain* of our *Salvation*. Let us consider his meekness; how, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatned not; but kindly interferred with his father to extenuate the *Guilt* of his blood thirsty murderers. Let us learn of him *patience* and *humility*, and we shall enjoy perfect Tranquility of mind, we shall then banish all hatred and malice out of our minds, and live in peace and amity one with another. Let this grand sacrifice be kept with a becoming *solemnity*, for it is that alone on which we rely for pardon of our own *Sins*. Yet I cannot help reflecting how carelessly we neglect the performance of this day's duty, set apart by authority for so divine an institution. How does the last collect for that day pray for all *Jews, Turks, Infidels and Heretics*, that God may take from them all ignorance and hardness of heart, and contempt of his *word*? But how few attend divine service to put up this charitable petition. God grant that those *nations* may not rise up in judgment against us *Christians* for

6 MISCELLANEOUS ESSAYS,

the careless neglect of our duty. In former times, after authority had worthily required *Good-Friday* to be observed as a day of devotion, and sequestered from all worldly business, it was religiously observed, by all ranks of people. But how different is the practice of this age, when scarce a Tradesman, mechanic, or husbandman, will leave their Employments to attend divine service.

IV. *EASTER-SUNDAY*, or the *RESURRECTION* of our SAVIOUR.

ON this day we *Christians* commemorate the anniversary festival of our *Saviour's* resurrection, which for it's antiquity and excellence, challenges the precedence of all others, as on it's veracity the *faith* of our religion is wholly grounded. The four *Evangelists* have cleared up this miraculous event, on whose authenticity Christianity is so solidly fixed, that it is neither in the power of men nor *Devils* to overturn it's establishment. And how have all the *Apostles* proved this, by not only enduring a life of persecution for it's sake, but laying it down also. What miracles

acles were they enabled to perform for it's propagation, and how did they empower others to do the same publicly, and frequently in the eyes of the whole *World*; which the bitterest Adversaries of the Christian *faith* never attempted to deny; so that truth in the end triumphed over error. What religion then is there on earth so well established, whose founder is the Almighty God, the everlasting *Father*, the *Prince of Peace*?

“As JESUS CHRIST is then risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. Let us keep this feast, not with the old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. For CHRIST being raised from the dead, dieth no more: death hath no more dominion over him: for in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Let us therefore reckon ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin: but alive unto God through JESUS CHRIST our LORD. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the

dead.

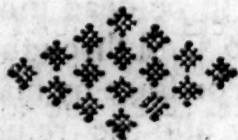
8 MISCELLANEOUS ESSAYS,

dead. For as in *Adam* all die, even so in CHRIST shall all be made alive." *Haleluiah!*

It is to be regreted, that when a reformation took place in this *kingdom*, our divines should have inferred the days of the week to continue their old superstitious names; more particularly this great festival, which ought to have been called, the resurrection of CHRIST. Was a heathen to ask, why the Christians called the days of their week after such names? And to receive for answer, that the seventh day, or the *Sabbath*, was called funday, because it was dedicated to the sun, monday to the moon, and all the succeeding days to their peculiar Gods! what would he conclude from our religion which acknowledges one God only? That by the names of the days of our week, we held in great veneration as many different Gods, or we would never have called the days by such names.

The months of the year require the same emendation.

The Quakers have rectified these obstacles.



V. WHITSUNDAY, or the Descent of the
HOLY GHOST upon the APOSTLES.

THIS solemn festival of the Christian church is observed on the fiftieth day after Easter, in memory of the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles; giving them power to work miracles, and a commission to preach his gospel to all nations; which was in the ancient church, one of the stated times for baptism, and was called by them Whit-Sunday, because those that were baptized, put on white garments, as types of that spiritual purity, they received in baptism. By the Jews, this festival is called *Pentecost*, and observed at the same time, in memory of the law being given them, fifty days after they came out of Egypt. Now, as they kept this festival with great solemnity for the law delivered them by *Moses*, with what solemnity ought we Christians to keep this festival, for the gospel delivered us by the messengers of JESUS CHRIST. Moreover, how does the Holy Ghost, poured on the Apostles, after the ascension of their Lord and master into heaven (which on this day we commemorate) strengthen and confirm them in propagating the same! What

B

greater

greater miracles would we wish to see in the establishment thereof, than a set of illiterate men, preaching to all nations, in their own languages, the wonderful works of God!

Let us then observe this festival with great thankfulness, by obeying the commands of his Holy Gospel, which he hath given us on the conditions of salvation; and though he is ascended into heaven, there to remain in glory till his second coming, yet he will not withhold his holy spirit, for the assistance of those, who strive to do their duty. To Father, Son and holy Ghost, be glory, for ever, and ever, Amen.

VL. CHRISTIANITY.

CHRISTIANITY is so glorious a title that its followers should seriously lay it to heart, and consider well the principles on which it was established; for on the well or ill performance thereof depends their future happiness or misery. How blessed must they be who have not only embraced, but persevered in that heavenly profession! But how cursed must they be, who, after having embraced it, turn apostate, and crucify

cify their blessed Redeemer over again! It is not so light and easy a matter as some imagine, to be a real and devout Christian; yet our blessed Redeemer invites all that labour and are heavy laden with sins, to come to him, and he will refresh them. That is, he will teach and instruct them in the ways of meekness, gentleness, and mercy, and will change their former burthensome servitude into a reasonable obedience of his precepts.

Now in order to attain these gracious promises, in the holy gospel, we must lay aside all earthly vanities and follies, set our affections on things above, and not on things below, and make it's precepts our entire study and delight, without variation or dissimulation. We must be strong, resolute, and unconquerable, not carrying on an obscure or hypocritical profession; but all our actions and expressions must continually shew that we are the disciples of *Christ*. We must hold no confederacy with any lust or known sin, we must be true to our promises, just in' all our dealings, charitable to the poor, sincere in our devotions, in whatever form or manner we chuse to serve God. Thus, by giving all diligence, by righteousness and holiness, we may make our calling and election sure.

VII. *The LOVE of GOD and our NEIGHBOUR.*

THE love of God, and the love of our Neighbour, are the two greatest commandments of both the *Law* and the *Gospel*. It need not be enumerated how great our love ought to be to him who giveth us all the blessings and comforts of this life, as well as health to enjoy them, if we are but careful enough to preserve it; but as he made us free agents, and left happiness or misery to our choice, we, through the frailty of our nature, embraced the alluring pleasures and vanities of this world, and forfeited that happiness; yet still we have an advocate with God, who took pity on us miserable creatures, purchased our redemption with his blood, and freed us from sin and destruction, by renewing the covenant, on condition of diligently fulfilling the commands of his holy gospel.

Let us, therefore, love our blessed Redeemer with all the powers of both body and soul, by keeping his commandments, for they are joyous and not grievous; and then we shall not fail to love our neighbour also; for love is the fulfilling of both the law and the gospel.

VIII.

VIII. PARENTS DUTY, *and* CHILDRENS OBEDIENCE.

WE are commanded by our great Creator, to honour and obey our parents, that our days on earth may be prolonged ; which is a duty so highly incumbent on children, that they are never able to discharge it. For what child is able to do as much for his father, as his father hath done for him? The parents care never cease till they are bereft of life ; neither ought it ; for, as our Heavenly Father is continually pouring his blessings on us without exception, so ought we upon our children ; for the old law impresses us to be continually instructing them, and *Solomon* tells us that if we shew them the right way in their youth, they will not depart from it.

Thus, by bringing them up in the fear of the Lord, they will continue to observe that strict obedience due to their parents, and will, at all times be ready to assist them if required, as far as lies in their power ; and thus, by children fulfilling the commandment, their days on earth will be prolonged.

IX. *READING the SCRIPTURES
and good BOOKS.*

OUR blessed Redeemer admonishes his disciples to search the scriptures, for in them are contained instruction how to gain eternal life, as well as miseries and woes pronounced to those nations that observe not their contents. What greater favours can any man shew to his fellow creatures, than depicting the vices of the age, and representing their follies in their proper colours? All the prophets sent to the once favourite people of God, were fraught with these instructions; and the apostles themselves gently rebuked those nations who were addicted to prophaness and idolatry.

Let me intreat my children, at leisure hours (but more particularly on the Sabbath-day) to let the word of God, or some godly book, be frequently perused; and let me also beg that no *Romance*, *Novel*, or lascivious *Comedy*, be in your possession; for they only shew you the intrigues of folly and wickedness, which probably you would not have harboured the least idea of, had they not represented them to you. Let ludicrous books, too much encouraged in
this

this age he shunned and rejected; and strive, by shewing a good example yourselves, to win over those who are too much inclined to peruse such pamphlets of folly and sensual pleasure.

X. *That RELIGION cannot be of GOD, which allows MEN in any WICKEDNESS.*

THE light of nature teaches infidels to worship a deity, to be just, to honour their parents, and the like. Now, though Christianity hath brought greater light into the world, it never meant to put out any of that natural light that God hath infused into our souls. Is it not shameful to see men, where Christianity is established, committing such sins as heathens would abhor? Men pretending to higher degrees of knowledge than their brethren, yet practise contrary to all the rules of decency, and honesty. How do the heathens exclaim against some Christians, who boast of the noble rules that the new testament hath prescribed, yet have neither desire nor inclination to put them in practice, because of the vicious

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cious life they choose to pursue, which hath got such an ascendancy over their passions, that they will not give themselves time nor leave to think, or reflect at all; nay they never speak of happiness, but with a sneer, nor of misery but with an air of defiance, as they hate the light of the gospel, because their deeds are evil.

If this be the liberty of conscience that some unthinking people profess, may the God of mercy open the eyes of such barbarians, that they may see through their follies, and repent, before they go hence and be no more seen.

XI. *FORGIVING ONE-ANOTHER.*

FORGIVENESS of trespasses represents so much the character of our blessed Redeemer, that it is one of the most serious petitions in the prayer he has taught us; for he says, if we do not forgive one-another, our Heavenly Father will not forgive us.—How far different is this from the Jewish laws, where it is an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth! so much more then does the profession of Christianity excel all other institutions.

institutions. Yet how far do we find those who call themselves *Christians* deviate from this Divine command of their Lord and Master! for the maxims which the Jews, and other nations had established, are become prevalent even amongst the professors of Christianity; as is evidently seen, by the great hatred and malice shewn to one-another.

Since our eternal happiness depends on our fulfilling this command, we must lay aside all animosities to one-another, and be willing to forgive our enemies as well as our friends; and then if we make it the conduct of our life to forgive one-another, we may rest assured (if we die in no sin unrepented of) that our Heavenly Father will forgive us our trespasses; for on no other principles can Christians expect eternal bliss hereafter.

XII. PUBLIC and PRIVATE DEVOTIONS.

PUBLIC and private devotions are so becoming all ranks of people, that they have been practised from the creation
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of the world to this time ; yet some alledge they have not opportunity ; others do not chuse to find any ; but what excuse can a man have for not lifting up his heart to God, even in the midst of his employment, or at any hour of the day ? It must be allowed that if a man be never so regular at his public and private devotions, and do not make his conduct in life agreeable to the laws of God, his public and private prayers will be found deceitful, and avail him nothing. For our blessed Redeemer tells us, that not every one that calleth him Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven, but he that doth the will of his Father which is in Heaven. Thus we plainly see, that to obey is better than sacrifice : and to hearken, than the fat of rams.

It is not to be doubted then, but that the well thinking man will not only make the law of God his chief delight and study, but will always be frequent at public and private prayers at all times, and on all occasions, when required, except bodily infirmities prevent him ; for he is assuredly told by his blessed Redeemer, that where two or three are gathered together in his name, there will he be in the midst of them, to hear and

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accept their prayers and thanksgivings, when devoutly performed.

XIII. *HONOURING the KING.*

HONOURING the King, obedience to magistrates and the laws of the land, are the duty of every subject in every state. —Where these are observed, the nation flourisheth; but when evaded or disregarded, it will be in danger of falling into anarchy and confusion. The increase of wickedness occasions the legislature so often to make alterations in the laws for the better preservation of justice and equity, as well as for punishing of vice and immorality, and probably, when they do all in their power, they may still fall short of their expectations.

Were CHRISTIANITY better inculcated, the laws of the land would be more revered; justice and equity would sooner be established; and we should readily and willingly conclude with our great Apostle, that loving our brethern, fearing God, and honouring the King, is the duty of every Christian.

XIV. MATRIMONY.

MATRIMONY being an institution established by God at the creation, for the propagation of our species, ought to be seriously considered, as the contract is not only solemn but honourable. The first miracle that the blessed Jesus did, was at a wedding; which plainly evinces to all Christian societies of people, how great a regard ought to be had to it. Yet in how little esteem is it held, when such numbers not only evade it by incontinent practices, but even the marriage bed is too frequently defiled! Moreover, the great number of illegitimate children that are destroyed, as also many who have better fortune to be reared up, yet are afterwards left to seek their bread, destitute and abandoned; and yet there are Christian nations who allow polygamy, and licence bawdy-houses.

Let us, my children, in order directly to fulfil this great command, observe the gospel precepts, and should you chuse to lead a single life, you must observe the strict chastity there required; but if you cannot contain, it is better to marry than burn. To avoid fornication, it is requisite that every
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man should have his own wife, and every woman her own husband; then we should adhere to the creator's precept, even to leave father and mother and cleave unto his wife; and what God hath joined together, we should not be desirable to put asunder.

XV. *FORNICATION and ADULTERY.*

ADULTERY, by the old law, was punished with death; but our blessed REDEEMER forgave the woman taken in the act, not omitting telling her at the same time, to go and sin no more. — By this example is shewn the condescending love of our Saviour, in pardoning the penitent. But let us not forget, that he enjoined a more strict obedience to chastity in his gospel, than the old testament had done; by telling us that whoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, committeth adultery with her in his heart. How little is the precept regarded in this age, even amongst those who call themselves Christians! For fornication and adultery are not only frequently and glaringly practised, but lasciviousness and lewd expressions very much made

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made the topic of common conversation.

Nothing is so expedient, to put a stop to those vices, as matrimony. Let not even the poorest sort of people be discouraged from it; they need not doubt if they enter into it as the ceremony of the church commands, with prudence and discretion, but the Supreme Being will not only pour his blessings on them, but enable them also to struggle through this world with comfort and satisfaction; so that instead of being beholden to a parish, they may become more helpful than needful, as well as a blessing to society.

XVI. LASCIVIOUSNESS and WANTONNESS.

LASCIVIOUSNESS and wantonness pursued to extremes, hurry on giddy youth quickly to destruction. Were but a book, entitled the *English Onania*, perused with care, the unthinking debauchees would there read the consequences of such wicked inclinations. The fair sex have been too frequently blamed, for those numerous disorders attending such lewd practices. I believe unthinking youths are more blameable

blameable as their seducers, as well as for their own manual and nocturnal pollutions. It is evident that modesty is more innate in the ladies than gentlemen. How apparent is it that the fair sex are frequently deluded, and debauched by the intrigues of artful men, who, as soon as their passions are gratified, turn them adrift, destitute and abandoned. Where are they to flee to for support? Either to the charitable assistance of the magdalen hospital, or the forlorn situation of a bawdy house! I wish the increase of these houses, fall not more severely on the male than the female sex.

Till religion be better inculcated and the laws of the land more strictly executed, there will be little progress in the principles of morality, for drunkenness and debauchery are the fountains of all wickedness.

XVN. *FOLLIES of YOUTH.*

THE follies of youth being early imbibed, it not only becometh parents, but all those who have the care of their education, narrowly to inspect as well as correct them. There is not a writer in the old testament

testament, who has left behind him more lessons of morality for the observance of youth than Solomon. He begins his book of Proverbs with their instruction, and he ends his preaching, with desiring them to remember their Creator in the days of their youth, before riper years come on them; for if they forget him in youth, they will not remember him in old age. And, indeed how should they? For it is said, that it is as easy for an *Æthiopian* to become white, as a wicked man to become good.

Now as the education of youth is of such great importance, it beyond measure becometh parents to lose no opportunity of instilling good principles into the minds of their children, and be continually instructing them in their duty to God and man, when they sit in the house, when they walk by the way, when they lie down, and when they rise up. For it is the only means of making good Statesmen, as well as good Christians.

XVIII. *The FOLLIES of the AGE, too much increased by COMMERCE with idolatrous Nations.*

IT is allowed, that every nation that strives to extend its commerce, not only adds to the benefit of the state, by increasing the number of inhabitants, but enriching individuals by their diligence and industry. Yet it is too true that we imbibe too much of their follies. We need not wonder what enormities those people run into, who have not the word of God for their guide; (though the Almighty leaves no kingdom destitute of such knowledge as is beneficial to their future welfare and happiness) no doubt but that those nations, which have adopted such scenes of folly and wickedness, must be sensible that they have deviated from the paths of virtue and godliness. This however, ought to be no rule to the *European* nations, who have embraced Christianity. Instead of imbibing their follies, they ought rather to correct or advise them to the contrary; for it is a sure maxim, that evil communications corrupt good manners, and good communications correct evil manners.

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Let no nation, or people, that have embraced Christianity, think that they are tolerated to commit wickedness, because the neighbouring states with whom they are connected, pursue such follies; but rather let them thank God that they have knowledge to do better; and let them strive with all their power, to bring those bewildered people to a better sense of their duty: knowing assuredly, that they who convert a sinner from his wickedness, shall themselves cover a multitude of sins.

XIX. *PROFUSION and PRODIGALITY.*

PROFUSION and Prodigality are so opposite to humanity and charity, that nothing disgraces Christianity more. The prodigal lavisheth away what ought to assist the industrious poor, and he who squandereth away his treasure voluptuously, and refuseth charitable actions to the distressed, may properly be compared to the rich man in the gospel; for the sole use of riches should be to do good with them. What woes did our blessed Lord pronounce against the rich, who made not a proper use of their riches!

riches! And how much did he condemn those who boasted of their charities! There is more danger in riches than poverty; for the poor man hath only the good of his own state committed to him; but the rich are intrusted with the welfare of thousands.— And be assured, there is more delight in being without what you have given, than in possessing great riches, without knowing their use.

The only happy wish in this life, is *Agar's*, and least liable to temptation; but if it please the Almighty giver of all things, to bestow his favours more abundantly upon us, let us not throw them away profusely or extravagantly; but make it our chief study daily to do good with them; for we must be accountable for their misapplication.

XX. *F A L S E and C O M M O N
S W E A R I N G.*

OF all the vices that mankind are liable to, nothing is so shocking or disagreeable to the ear, as false and common swearing. There are not wanting many who delight in cheating, tricking, and defrauding
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their neighbours ; nay, for the sake of filthy lucre, some will not stick to swear their lives and fortunes away. How shocking, that in the place of public judicature, there are those unfortunate wretches to be found ! Moreover, *Common swearing* being so lightly and insignificantly thought of, is become far too habitual and frequent a practice.

These vices are entirely owing to the heedless neglect of parents correcting their children in youth. How many of them do we find frequently swearing, when scarce capable of speaking plain ; and if no education or instruction be given them, in order to eradicate that vice, when they come up to men, they will be in danger of not scrupling to take a perjured oath.

XXI. D U E L L I N G.

DUELLING having become fashionable, it would be greatly worthy the legislature's notice to interfere, and if possible to put a stop thereto. When *Cæsar* received a challenge from *Anthony* to engage him in single combat, he calmly answered the bearer of the message : If *Anthony* be
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weary of his life, tell him, that there are other ways to death, besides the point of my sword. What an example of discretion is here shewn by a heathen; one would naturally think then that Christians should act more prudently, as our religion teacheth us not to resist evil. Let those desperadoes think what they please. All duels or single combats are murders; though they are never so much blanched over with honourable pretensions, their use is sinful and their nature devilish. It were greatly to be wished, that quarreling and fighting so frequent amongst the inferior class of people, could be diminished also; as it would not only prevent a great number of animosities, but more firmly cement the ties of humanity society and friendship due to one another. It may be alledged, that if never so severe laws were made on that head, it would be difficult to restrain the profligate and abandoned. It is true, the bad seed is sown in youth; and when ripened into manhood, will scarcely be eradicated.

It is required of parents then, as well as schoolmasters, severely to correct those under their care, when found guilty of such revengeful and turbulent passions, (as some
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will be found more prone to them than others) and when they approach to puberty, that strict education and correction will not be forgotten.

XXII. *BAD COMPANY.*

NOTHING ought to be more avoided, by youth, than bad company ; as nothing is so dangerous ; for evil communications corrupt good manners. It has been often the destruction of many unfortunate wretches. *Solomon* frequently cautions his son to avoid their insinuations, by bidding him not to enter into the path of the wicked, nor go in the way of evil men.—For, says he, their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed blood. Now, had he not seen the consequences attending their actions, he would not have so often repeated these instructions to his son.

No better advice than his can be given to youth, for he requests them to put away sorrow from their heart, and evil from their flesh ; and tells them that childhood and youth are vanity. And he says also, that if they will cheer themselves up in the days
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of their youth, and walk in the ways of their heart, and in the sight of their eyes, yet they must not forget to remember that God will bring them to judgment

XXIII. *ACTIONS and EXPRESSIONS.*

IF mankind would but have a strict regard to their actions, as well as expressions, and conduct themselves according to the best of their knowledge, it would not only shew a good example to others, but greatly add to their own and neighbour's felicity. And how far example prevails beyond precept, is daily seen among us; for how ready are we to set at nought, the instructions of our teachers, who advise us to refrain from vices they may probably be guilty of themselves! Never considering that they are frail as well as we. It is true, that to whom much is given much is required; for he that hath five talents must be answerable for five; and he that hath but one, only for one. Let us not conclude then that education alone makes men good; if that were the case, what would become of those who have not been fortunate enough to get any! Our thoughts.

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thoughts must be guarded as well as actions and expressions; for the royal preacher tells us, "that he that deviseth to do evil, shall be called a mischevious person; and the thoughts of foolishness is sin."

As we are all, by nature, full of frailties, and equally liable to temptations and follies, let us not bury our talent in the ground, but strive with all our might to improve it. — Then we would make religion our chief conductor, and our actions and expressions would frequently testify it.

XXIV. *BACKBITING, CALUMNY, and SLANDER.*

BACKBITING, Calumny, and Slander being such prevailing evils, it is impossible to evade their censures, what manner of life soever we pursue. You can scarce converse with any body but the question is, what news? And there are many who in repeating a tale increase it so quickly to the highest degree, that in the morning it is only petty larceny, but in the evening felony. Or should you be at a visit with your friends or neighbours, and then declare
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your sentiments candidly and openly, should some of the hearers be of a different opinion, either by putting a wrong construction on your expressions, or for want of a memory to retain them, or better abilities to define them, you are then liable to their censures; for there are some of such perverse and obstinate tempers, that nothing their neighbours say or do can please them.

Would every man strive to improve the talents given him, attend with care to his daily employment, and at leisure divert himself with some innocent amusement, he would soon be convinced to lay aside tattling and backbiting, and be clearly sensible that it is better to do good than evil, and to be silent rather than speak amiss of his neighbour; "For the Lord seeth not as man seeth: For man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart."

XXV. DRUNKENNESS.

OF all the follies that the human race are subject to, nothing degrades them more than Drunkenness; for the drunkard employs himself in erasing the illustrious signature of reason which God stamped upon him in creation, as the prerogative of his nature; and also makes himself incapable of his duty, while he is ready to commit every sin to which a temptation offers. How far it is prevalent in this nation, is daily seen in all taverns, places of amusement and diversion, and particularly amongst the inferior class of people. The Supreme Being does not deny us any of the comforts of life, provided we use them so as not to abuse ourselves thereby. How delightfully might we enjoy a glass with an acquaintance, if friendship and sociability were the only desired objects!

As the vices and miseries of the lower class of people, chiefly arise from the multiplication of public houses of entertainment, numbers might be suppressed without any hurt to the revenue. And if the characters of those to whom licences are granted, were strictly scrutinized, it would be the
best

best means of putting a stop to sottish dissipation and of saving numbers from beggary and destruction.

XXVI. GAMING.

OF all the amusements of life, Gaming is ofteneft attended with the must fatal consequences. The ladies, as well as gentlemen, have greatly imbibed the pleasure; nay indeed, we find many in all situations who have sucked in the infection, so dry, that they have frequently been undone by it. How many might be named that have lost both fortune and life thereby!

Were the covetous desire of winning money, as well as the dangerous consequences attending the losing it, seriously considered by all ranks of people, their diversions might be deemed *Pleasures*; but, without that regard, these amusements must be called *Follies*.

XXVII. COVETOUSNESS.

COVETOUSNESS, when it superabounds in any person, is termed Idolatry; for where the treasure is, there will the heart be also. Our principal treasure ought not to be on earth, but in heaven; and if riches increase, we ought not to set our hearts upon them. The scriptures inform us that the love of money is the root of all evil. That the rich fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown them in destruction and perdition. Moreover, a covetous man can scarcely be called honest; for he often increases his riches on dishonest principles.

Nothing will check this vice, or put a stop to it, but a setting our affections on things above and not on things below. For the time is short we have to enjoy them; and who knoweth but this night our soul may be required of us, even in the very height of projecting and making our fortunes? And then it is doubtful whether our ill-gotten riches will have any continuance with our successors.

XXVIII. *GOING to LAW.*

G OING to Law with our brethern is so far contrary to the gospel precepts, that we are commanded to suffer wrong rather than engage in it. Now, if we call ourselves professors of Christianity, why do we not better observe its precepts? Were our life or estate in danger, or villainy to be prosecuted, there might be some excuse; but far too many are frequently going to law, and that for trifles only; nay, even when the costs exceed the debt. This favours of a malevolent principle.

Were we endowed with any reasonable humanity, and observed that Golden Rule of doing to others, as we would have them do to us, we should better observe our Redeemer's commands, and would sooner suffer wrong than go to law. "Let us then put away from us, all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour, evil speaking and malice, and let us live in peace one with another."

XXIX. *CRUELTY and REVENGE.*

CRUELTY and Revenge are so diabolical that they are not only disgusting, but disgraceful to the professors of Christianity. Yet how frequently do we find those impious monsters appearing in all situations of life! Nay, indeed, we find children so prone to them, that one would imagine those passions were inherent in our nature. It is true, we are born in sin, and liable to all temptations that beset and surround us; so that undoubtedly, without restraint, we should be guilty of innumerable vices and follies. But what shall we say of those parents who delight to see a child revenge itself, even so far as to pitched handy blows? Thus carelessly corrected, what cruelties and revenge will not that child be guilty of, when he arrives at maturity!

Let all parents, of what rank soever, strive to curb these prevailing passions, as soon as discovered in their children. Then they will be ready to acquiesce in the gospel rules, "That if any one should smite them on the right cheek, they will turn to him the left also."

XXX.

XXX. *AMBITION and TYRANNY.*

AMBITION and Tyranny are frequently the forerunners of desolation and destruction. They have not only been the downfall of empires, but of communities and families. The ambitious man is never satisfied, till his wants or desires be fulfilled, though too often at the risk of his character, fortune, or life. Moreover, the latter frequently accompanies the former; and, when joined together, fatal consequences generally ensue.

Were mankind content with their stations, and diligently to perform the duties incumbent thereon; were riches and honour their attendants here, humility would soon teach them the short duration of earthly grandeur; would also banish those monsters, and create in the minds of all ranks of people that sincere love and obedience due to one-another. Then the lion and lamb would play together; peace and happiness would be restored; and the duties of Christianity would cement the ties of friendship, humanity, and contentment, never to be separated.

XXXI.

XXXII. SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

THE promoting of Sunday Schools is, doubtless, a mark of good disposition in the inhabitants of such places as they are established in: but hitherto their encouragement seems principally confined to large and populous places, where these undertakings indeed reflect great credit, and must produce good effects. But the necessity of such seminaries is not superceded by any other plan of Christian education in country villages and hamlets. Immorality will thrive in any soil, if it be not checked by the weeding hand of salutary instruction. It is true, the little town of *Dalston* in this county, has established a Sunday School: but we have not a Mr. PALEY in every village.

There is perhaps a method of producing Sunday Schools, even in places where the usual mode of subscription cannot be adopted.—Suppose the Right Reverend, the Bishops of this kingdom, should give a strict charge to every school-master in their respective dioceses, not only to instruct their scholars in the church catechism, once or twice a week, but to use prayers in their schools

schools morning and evening; and (if the school be so situated as to admit of it conveniently) to meet every Sunday morning, and be exercised in such parts of the Christian doctrine as apply more immediately to the discharge of duties, which, as members of that body whereof CHRIST is the head, we are bound to observe:—duties, however, which must be first *known*, before they be *practised*.

From such exercises, I leave any person to judge under what impressions, and in how fit a temper of mind, the young may be conducted to the place of public worship. A practice, like this, was observed in the celebrated school at *Appleby*, while under the charge of that great master, the late Mr. *Tates*; and I think it is not unreasonable to conclude, that it might be made general by the authority of our Prelates; and if general, it would become highly instrumental in promoting the welfare both of church and state. An endeavour to institute a practice of this sort would be discharging the duty of a good citizen, as well as of a Christian.—Religion never received more pure or uniform homage from the throne of these kingdoms, than it has done during the pre-

sent reign. Such a conduct must therefore secure the approbation of the Prince, and will in no wise pass without a reward from the Almighty, who delighteth in the man that has power, and exerteth that power for the reformation of his brethren.

XXXII. *BANKRUPTCY.*

BANKRUPTCY having become at present too fashionable a practice, not only to the utter ruin of many individuals, but to the great discredit of trade, it would be worthy the Legislature's notice to interfere, in order, if possible, to put a stop to the many iniquitous proceedings therein pursued. Should a man steal only *forty shillings*, the law is ready to condemn him; but if a man break in *ten thousand pounds* debt, and pay only five shillings in the pound, he probably evades the lash of the law, and becomes richer than ever; never considering how many he has undone.

Pride and *luxury* must be banished, and *industry* and *economy* instituted in their room, or a proper remedy will never take

place

place. How far Sunday Schools, if strenuously encouraged by our Reverend Prelates, would succeed, a short time will discover; for nothing bids fairer to remove the grievances of the state, than the propagation of *religion* and *morality*; and where are the ignorant to be instructed, but at such schools?

XXXIII. IDLENESS.

IDLENESS, increasing in any state hindereth the prosperity thereof. How far this nation is affected thereby, is apparently seen by the increase of the poor rates. Forty years ago, several parishes did not expend more than three or four pounds a year in the support of their poor, which are now as many hundreds. Some may, perhaps, attribute it to extravagancy and luxury; but Idleness is the first cause; nay, indeed it is the forerunner of numberless disorders also. When do you see the industrious peasant troubled with hypochondriac or hysteric disorders? Perhaps, some may attribute them to studious and sedentary people only; but would those take re-

gularly as much delight in riding, walking, or any other bodily exercise, as in their inactive employments, they would soon be freed from their disorders.—Till the Legislature make some emendations in the poor laws, for their constant and better employment, all the extravagancies and misdemeanors among the lower class of people cannot be banished; for idleness is the parent of them all.

XXXIV. *P R I D E and L U X U R Y.*

PRIDE and Luxury, when they superabound in any nation, become at last its total overthrow. How far the people of England are bewildered by these overprevailing follies, is plainly seen by the great increase of bankruptcies. Would mankind only live in reasonable bounds, and not exceed their income, it would greatly discourage these depredators of our happiness and welfare; but pride sets us too much on a level one with another. The servant appears gayer than his master, and the tenant than his landlord. Till a better subordination takes place, we cannot hope
for

for better times. Perhaps it may be said that our superiors shew us a bad example. What have we to do with the example of others? I own it is very striking to the inferior class of people; but it will be of little avail to us (at a future day of reckoning) to say, that we followed such vices, because our superiors were guilty of the same. We are happy that the word of God informs us that the father shall not answer for the wickedness of his son, (except he has been deficient in advising) neither shall the son answer for the father; but every person must bear his own iniquity.

It then becometh every man to consider well the station that Providence hath placed him in here; and he will be careful to avoid extremes as well in dress as diet, and will always imprint in his mind the wise man's expression "That pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall."

XXXV. *STEALING, CHEATING, and DEFRAUDING.*

STEALING, Cheating, and Defrauding our neighbours, are become so prevalent, that our Legislature must be at a loss what method to take for the more speedy and effectual discouragement thereof. How shocking is it, when men are detected in picking of pockets, even in the seat of judicature, and under the gallows! It clearly evinces that the abandoned principles of this age are increasing, and without some remedy, must soon be of an alarming nature.

Were the actions of youth strictly noticed by parents, guardians, and instructors, and when found guilty of any fraudulent practices, lying, gaming, or any other methods of extravagantly wasting their time or money, corrected in the bud; it would help greatly towards the discouragement of vice and wickedness. But no thorough remedy can take place till religion and morality be better established; which bids fairest to come from the promotion and encouragement of Sunday Schools.

XXXVI.

XXXVI. S U I C I D E.

OF all the crimes that mankind are guilty of, none is so inhuman as self-murder. It often happens that the pleasures of this world, rashly pursued without consideration, shorten the days of many people. But what can we say of those who lay violent hands upon themselves? We are frequently informed that some great trouble, loss, or heinous crime, hath been the occasion of such rash proceedings. For they undoubtedly despair of God's mercy and assistance, or they would not be guilty of so flagrant an offence. But let them seriously consider that there is no sin so grievous but what may be repented of, and what the word of God assures us hath been forgiven, on sincere repentance.

The only remedy against such vile proceedings is to search the scriptures, and there we shall frequently behold the righteous, in all ages, under severe persecutions and troubles. Nay, even the blessed Son of God not exempt from them; therefore, let us reason with ourselves as *Job* did, and be content to wait all the days of our life, till the appointed time of our change come.

And

And let us also expostulate with ourselves, as the holy *Psalmist* did, and say, "Why art thou so full of heaviness, O my soul? and why art thou so disquieted within me? Put thy trust in God, and suffer contentedly; for he is able, and will deliver thee, when it seemeth meet to his godly wisdom."

XXXVII. PLEASURE and DELIGHT.

THE pleasures and delights of this world are so transient, that they appear (even after enjoyment) as a dream or shadow; yet so fluctuating and unsteady are frail mortals, that they are foolishly and constantly hankering after them; nay, even when they know that the too eager pursuit thereof will endanger both fortune and constitution; and what is of far greater consequence, eternal happiness, if not repented of. They may perhaps say that all things were created for the benefit and use of man, and that he has liberty to enjoy the good things of this life. But let them observe then the restriction, not to abuse themselves thereby.

Would but man then seriously consider
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the nature of this great prerogative given him, the good things of this life would either be rejected, or used with such moderation, as would not only give happiness to himself, but to all around him.

XXXVIII. *PROSPERITY and
ADVERSITY.*

PROSPERITY and adversity, being constant attendants on the human race, it behoveth us all with chearful resignation to accept their approach. But how many do we find, in prosperity, totally forget that ever adversity may befall them; nay often forget their fellow creatures and their God. And we also find that when adversity afflicts us, our spirits are frequently depressed, and our hopes banished from the expectation of ever being relieved; and what is far more dangerous, almost in despair.—Now, as the pleasures of the one, and troubles of the other, are evidently seen to be natural accidents, or perhaps sent to correct our follies, or try our patience, we ought chearfully to submit to them.

Rouse then, my children, your spirits,
G and

and let your understanding teach you to be humble minded, charitable and compassionate, when in prosperity; and when in adversity, be content; know that, if sent from God, it will turn out at last to your universal satisfaction and happiness; for "whatever is (if it come from him) is best."

XXXIX. C H A R I T Y.

CHARITY is of so extensive a quality, that it centres innumerable duties in its circle. *St. Paul* tells us that we may give all our goods to feed the poor, and yet not be endowed with real charity. He does not mean to restrain our benevolent principles, but increase them; for charity, says he, begetteth love to God and our fellow creatures, faith, hope, and perseverance. And if we be endowed with those gifts, it will increase our humanity, even by doing good to the most unworthy.

In order therefore to attain this greatest of all gifts, let us lay aside evil speaking, malice, hatred, and revenge; and let all our actions consist in being good ourselves,
and

and doing good to others, according to the utmost of our abilities; and then we shall attain that most excellent gift of charity, which covereth a multitude of sins: for it is the child of faith, and a guide to everlasting felicity.

XL. HUMANITY *and*
COMPASSION.

HUMANITY and Compassion are such endearing qualifications, that they are the very badges of the christian profession. There need not a day pass over our heads without a display more or less, of those heavenly talents. What numerous objects of distress have we frequently around us! The sick, the lame, the blind, the aged and infirm, the orphan and widow demand our attention and compassion. Nay, innumerable accidents, casualties, and misfortunes, are daily presenting themselves before our eyes, wherein we may have liberty to put in action those humane principles. Some may, perhaps argue, that the laws of the land have provided for the necessitous poor. It is true;

but how many distressful misfortunes and calamities happen frequently among us that do not come under this denomination! Besides, how many bashful creatures are there, who would almost die of hunger before they would apply to a parish for relief!

Let us therefore, exert ourselves according to our abilities, in doing all the good we can to our fellow creatures, especially when in distress. Then we shall fulfil our Saviour's commands; for he tells us, that what is done to those poor and unfortunate brethren, who cannot requite us, is done unto him.

XLI. *DAILY BREAD.*

THE first petition in the Lord's Prayer, respecting ourselves, is begging of our heavenly Father daily sustenance, which is the first thing needful for our bodies, and for which we ought to give him our most sincere thanks; because our weak endeavours are not able to procure us any thing without his aid and assistance; but by our honest endeavours and his blessing, we may be enabled to support ourselves.

Yet

Yet how many do we find, not only careless in striving to support themselves, but more careless in begging his assistance, or thanking him for what they do receive! What worthless wretches are we, who tho yet endowed with reason, not to give him thanks for our daily food? And we see far too many neglect this required duty.

Let us rouse ourselves from those careless and evil habits we have been too long accustomed to; let us shew ourselves men and Christians; and let us remember that our blessed Redeemer, at his last supper, gave thanks. Let us imitate him as far as we are able; and let us not forget constantly to pray to God for the relief of our bodies, as well as our souls. And let us also remember, never to abuse ourselves with those inestimable blessings that the Almighty hath thought proper to bestow upon us.

XLII. *TEMPTATION.*

THE last petition in the prayer which the Son of God hath taught us, is
begging

begging that our heavenly Father would not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for he well knew that our frail nature would occasion numerous temptations and evils to surround us, and which he knew also we could not withstand, without the assistance of his Grace and holy Spirit, and that we should be frequently deluded by the glittering baits of the world, the flesh, and the Devil; therefore he continually requests us to be on our guard, that we draw not these temptations or evils wilfully on ourselves; for he will not suffer us to be tempted more than we are able to encounter, if we strive to resist them.

Now, in order to shun these temptations, let us abstain from all the appearances of evil; and should the frailty of our nature tempt us to sin, let us not persevere in it, but strive with all our might to conquer those passions that are most likely to enslave us; and by persevering with care in the gospel precepts, as well as praying frequently to our heavenly Father for his assistance, he will enable us to withstand all those temptations and evils that so frequently visit us.

XLIII. *J U D G E not, that ye be not
J U D G E D.*

JESUS CHRIST, in his admirable sermon on the mount, expressly commands us not to judge one another; for he says, Judge not, that ye be not Judged. And he also says, that with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. He likewise bids the hypocrite cast the beam out of his own eye, and he will see more clearly to pull the mote out of his brother's eye. So that it plainly appears, in all his expressions, that pardon and forgiveness were the principal topics of his conversation, and the grand characteristic of his mission; for he knew well our frailties, how continually we were transgressing the laws of our Maker, and continually wanted forgiveness. So that it is evident, if we will be rash in judging one another, we must expect the same treatment ourselves.

Now, if we wish to be our Lord's disciples, let us strictly obey this precept; let us always do to others, as we would have them to do to us. Then we shall be sparing in
judging

judging our brother; for on this depends our judgment with God.

XLIV. *CARE and FEAR.*

CARE and Fear are passions established in the breast of every individual; the former ought to teach us industrious principles without covetousness; like Martha in the Gospel, who was careful for many things. But undoubtedly her worldly care was no more than reasonably requisite, otherwise she would have been rebuked by our blessed Redeemer. The latter should direct us not to be disquieted by vain fears, nor let our hearts sink under us from the phantoms of imagination; for from too much fear misfortunes proceed. We generally find wickedness committed in the dark, for fear of being seen by men, and for fear of corporal punishment; never considering the fear of HIM to whom day and night are equally alike.

Seeing daily that the good things of this life are so transient, our too eager care after them should be moderated; and we ought
never

never to let fear make us despond, but let reason conduct us in all our undertakings. Then would success attend us, and our chief care would be to fear HIM, who is not only able to give us happiness here, but everlasting felicity hereafter.

XLV. *HOPE and DESPAIR.*

HOPE is so entertaining an idea, that it encourageth us to fight through all difficulties, to gain the expected end. Despair is so far to the contrary, that it terrifies our soul with vain fears, and makes every good thing seem impossible to be acquired. Hope crowns all our wishes, if we fix it not beyond the bounds of probability. Therefore reason should be our dictator, and success would ensue. Nevertheless should disappointments attend our reasonable endeavours, a right grounded hope will prepare us to meet all events with an equal mind. Despair spreadeth a veil over all good actions, and represents them to the mind in the gloomiest aspect. She poisoneth the sweets of life; therefore let us not suffer her to enter our habitations.

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Rouse

Rouse thyself then, O man! to the combat. Shake off despair, and let thy understanding tell thee that man was born to troubles, as the sparks fly upwards. Let religion be thy guide, and eternal bliss thy hope; and beg of the Lord thy God, not to suffer thee to be tempted more than thou art able to bear; for without his assistance thou canst do nothing. Then the greatest misfortune will not depress thee; for the hopes of everlasting felicity, patiently pursued, will enable thee to bear up under all.

XLVI. *PAIN and SICKNESS.*

PAIN and Sickness are the concomitant companions of this our earthly pilgrimage; though we find some less afflicted than others. Our days on earth may justly be called *few* and *evil*; so that we ought continually to be on our watch, in order to guard against, or bear up under, all the temptations, misfortunes, and sickness, that may befall us. Mankind, not only by their frailties, are liable to contingencies and disasters, but are frequently bringing them

them on themselves, for want of prudence and discretion; which might have been avoided. What shocking disorders do we see introduced daily by our follies! and at the same time we see the most prudent and discreet persons not able to evade them.

It behoves then all of us, to be content under afflictions, whether by acquirement, or the hand of God; and to bear up under them with the greatest resignation. And should it be our good fortune to have a less share than our neighbours, let us be pitiful and compassionate to them who suffer more; seriously reflecting what the blessed Son of God suffered to expiate our guilt, and who omitted not to tell us, that we must be content, if required to forfeit all our property, our nearest kindred, our wife and children, nay even life itself, or we cannot be his disciples.

XLVII. *MERCY and PEACE.*

MERCY and Peace are such attributes of heavenly perfection, that our Blessed Saviour, in his sermon on the mount, pronounces them happy that are

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endowed

endowed with them; for, says he, blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy; and blessed are the peace makers, for they shall be called the children of God. Yet justice is an attribute of heaven as well as mercy; therefore, when justice requires punishment, the law must be fulfilled. Now, how excellent must christianity be beyond all other professions, that hath such heavenly dictates for its guide; yet we see malevolence, revenge, and discord too much prevailing, and frequently practised by those who go under the denomination of christians.

Let us, my children, shake of those disturbers of our peace and happiness. Let us imitate our great benefactor to the utmost of our power. Let us be just and honest in all our dealings one with another; and willing at all times, to be compassionate and merciful, even to our greatest enemies. Then we may rest perfectly assured that the Prince of Peace will be merciful to us.

XLVIII. *REVILINGS and PERSECUTIONS.*

REVILINGS and Persecutions were not only the attendants of our blessed Redeemer, whilst on earth, but of all his apostles and propagators of christianity. And indeed they are in some measure the companions of those who chuse to lead a godly life; for they that will live godly must suffer persecutions. It is evident, that when godly persons shun the actions and follies of the wicked, they are naturally reviled by them; but should they expose, or condemn their frailties, they are not only reviled but persecuted also. What antipathy has darkness to light? Or the sons of Belial to the sons of God? Seeing then that the persecutions of the wicked have an end with this life, how sweet must the reflection be to the godly, that their power is but of short duration!

Let then the persecutions and sufferings of the Son of God enter deep into our minds; and as he who knew no sin, was hated and persecuted without a cause, what ought not we to suffer who have so many offences to be attoned for! Let us beg the
assistance

assistance of his holy spirit, to enable us to shun the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil. For he invites all those that are weary, and heavy laden with sins, to come to him, and he will give them rest.

XLIX. *MISERY and TROUBLE.*

MAN that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble; and the author of these words further vindicates these expressions, by assuring us, that we are born to troubles, as the sparks fly upwards. From which it is clearly evident, that the degeneracy of our nature makes us liable to them; therefore, it is impossible to avoid them. Good and evil being set before us, and rewards and punishments their concomitants, occasion this life to be called a warfare; and our being made free agents, causes the merit or demerit of this warfare; therefore if we choose the one rather than the other, we shall undoubtedly receive its ensuing contents.

Let us then seriously consider that as we receive good at the hands of God, ought we not then to receive evil? or rather suffer
correction

correction for our misconduct and folly ; knowing assuredly, that the blessed Son of God was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief ; and, according to his own expressions, had no where to lay his head, as well as all his ministers and adherents, who not only were continually under afflictions and persecutions, but willingly suffered death, for the propogation of his holy religion.—Ought not then these examples to excite our patience to submit to the entire will of God, and bear up under all our misery and trouble.

L. *The Author's ADDRESS to his children, on reverencing the Sabbath.*

THE Sabbath is become so greatly neglected by the people of this kingdom, that I cannot look over enjoining, and strictly charging you, my Dear children, devoutly to observe that Day. You are not unacquainted how expressive the command of the Deity is in the observance of it ; yet I fear, there is more sin and folly committed on that day, than on any other. For being freed from our wordly employments, we
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let ourselves loose to folly and pleasure, and even though we put on a cloak of sanctity, by attending Divine Service, yet how heedless are we in performing the duties there required ! And how neglectful of receiving the instructions there given ! Moreover, the folly of dress and grandeur, seen at church in some, as also the ridiculous and unseeming behaviour of others, would better agree with an assembly or playhouse. I wish this be not deemed a mockery of religion. Were we to pay our addresses to our good and gracious Sovereign, for a place of honour and preferment, we would certainly appear before him in such a manner as we would hope to meet with success. How then ought we to appear before HIM ! who is all knowing, as well as the giver of all good things, and who (on serious reflection) is all powerful too ; for he will surely cast the body and soul into hell, of those who trample under feet his divine commands.

Let us, my dear children, before it be too late, examine ourselves, and see whether we are not of the above number ; let us strictly observe the commands of our blessed Redeemer, who is Lord of the Sabbath.

Let us constantly attend Divine Service
with

with a becoming decency, and when the day is not agreeable for a rural walk, let it be spent in reading the scriptures or some good author, or in an innocent dish of tea with some worthy friend. Thus by our shewing a good example, we shall instigate others to do the same.

LI. *The serious WISH of being HAPPY
HERE, as well as HEREAFTER.*

IT must be the desire of all men to enjoy happiness here, as well as hereafter. It may be said, perhaps, that riches, and health to enjoy them, are the greatest happiness here; which is entirely the reverse:—for we often find, that riches, and health to enjoy them, by our improper use thereof, deprive us too often of both these earthly blessings. But should not that be the case, we probably may be lifted up by them, so as to forget our duty to God, and benevolence to our fellow creatures; and be delighted too much with ambition and honour, which cannot create happiness. What course then should we pursue to make life most agreeable, and what steps ought we to

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take

take to secure happiness hereafter !

As health, with contentment, are the greatest blessings in this life, it behoveth all ranks of people to fill their stations with credit and honour ; and if they will permit regularity and temperance to be their conductors, they may obtain happiness here ; and meekness, with humility and charity, steadily pursued, will undoubtedly gain it hereafter.

LII. H E A L T H.

OF all the blessings we enjoy here, Health is the greatest ; therefore it ought to be our whole study to preserve it ; and as nothing is so conducive thereto as exercise, cleanliness and subduing our passions, how careful then ought we to be, to avoid every extreme of what kind soever ! Yet, how far the reverse do we act, and so careless are we of preserving that inestimable benefit, that it seems to be totally neglected by us. How frequently do we drink each others health, when enjoying our glasses, though at the same time we pride ourselves in intoxicating one another ! How ready
are

are we to pursue the vanities and pleasures of this world, though at the risk of both fortune and health ! Nay, so eager are we in pursuit of riches, that we totally destroy our health in acquiring them.

Let moderation, prudence, and temperance be our guide, then we may perhaps enjoy that chief of all blessings, to a reasonable old age.

LIII. CONTENTMENT.

CONTENTMENT is connected with Health, that the one might be regarded as much as the other ; for health would not create happiness without contentment. Of what service would riches be to a discontented mind ! Or what would become of the poor man, if contentment were not his conductor ! As fortune bestows her favours so wild and extravagantly, to some far too much, to others too little ; some we find frequently enjoy a good state of health, others but indifferent ; some liable to casualties and disasters, others fortunate in all their undertakings ; some to rise to great promotion and honours, others totally rejected

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and disregarded; some tyrants and usurpers, others totally regardless of their welfare.

Since then this life is only a state of probation and trial, and but of a short duration, let us bear up under all the contingencies therot; then we shall be ready to say with our great Apostle, "that whatsoever state we are in, we have learned to be content," for no riches are comparable to a contented mind.

LIV. PRUDENCE & CONSIDERATION.

PRUDENCE and Consideration should be the serious result of our actions; yet how frequently do we observe these grand conductors of our welfare too little noticed. The rash and imprudent have reason to repent of their follies; but not perhaps till it be too late. How many fine armies have been cut off by the imprudence of their commanders, and states overturned for want of prudent counsellors! Nay, we find that almost all the disasters that befall us, are owing to want of prudence and consideration.

Let

Let us then hear the dictates of prudence, and give head unto her counsels; for she is the guide of human life. Let us also hearken to the voice of consideration; for she speaketh the words of wisdom, and her paths shall lead us to safety.

LV. WISDOM and KNOWLEDGE.

WISDOM and Knowledge are such good qualifications, that it ought to be our chief delight to acquire them. How frequently do we find men exerting all their faculties to procure riches and honours! which probably may have no lasting duration. But how few do we find thirsting after wisdom and knowledge! which when once acquired will be an everlasting source of comfort and satisfaction. There can be no greater pleasure to man than in studying the works of omnipotence, in the creation of the world, and all things therein. What wonders and beauties do we see in every part thereof! And how must we be delighted, when we consider they were all made for our benefit! Look up to the heavens, and behold their splendor. Look upon

upon the earth, and behold her beautiful produce. Cast your eyes on a flower, and with what beauty and fragrancy does it appear! Not to be imitated by man; nay, the whole creation is rapture to an inquisitive mind.

Exert yourselves then, my children, and let it be your chief study to find wisdom; "and, with all your getting, get understanding; for she is more precious than rubies, and all the things that you can desire are not to be compared to her. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." She will assist you to get through this world comfortably, and procure you everlasting happiness in the world to come.

LVI. *AGRICULTURE more beneficial
to a STATE than TRADE.*

IT has been the study of the legislature, of all prosperous nations, to increase the welfare of the state, not only by trade, but agriculture also; for the real strength of every kingdom depends on population, and the only solid basis of a numerous population

lation is agriculture; for without it the subsistence of a nation is precarious; but more particularly this kingdom, which is surrounded by the ocean. If agriculture had not been improved in days of old, how must so many flourishing nations have arrived at such a pitche of grandeur as history affords! What must support a numerous race of people, or great armies, but agriculture?

It behoveth then the legislators of this kingdom, to give every encouragement (by offering premiums, or any other mode they think more requisite) for planting of trees, as well for the navy, which is the support of trade, as husbandry; for without such care the kingdom will ere long be in the utmost necessity; annexing, at the same time, all encouragement to the industrious husbandman.

LVII. *J U S T I C E.*

JUSTICE is one of the principal attributes of the Deity, as well as the foremost of the Cardinal Virtues recommended
to

7 to man; so that the more we imitate our just, yet merciful Creator, the more we shall be esteemed by him. Our duty to God may be summed up in a narrow compass; namely, "in doing justice, loving mercy, and walking humbly with him." All other good qualifications will centre in these. Yet how much do we find this noble duty deviated from, even amongst nations, who have the word of God for their guide! Where is that man's justice, that is continually cheating and defrauding his neighbour, and running into debt, without any intention of paying it again? Where is that man's justice, who taketh bribes to pervert the truth? Or where is that man's justice, who omits bringing a delinquent to punishment when in his power? Which if he had done, might probably have put a stop to further mischief. The thoughts of being merciful were perhaps the object of not prosecuting, or the expences attending it. It is true, mercy is an attribute of the Deity as well as justice, to which side we ought to lean; but it cannot be called prudent nor merciful, in suffering wickedness to go unpunished. When truth cannot be clearly come at, it is better

to defer punishment, than condemn the innocent. Were justice to be bribed, or deferred putting in execution, neither our persons, nor properties would be safe; it is by that heedless delay, that occasions much villainy to be perpetrated. This kingdom abounds with the noblest code of laws in the universe, particularly that of trial by jury, and if those jurors were constantly chosen out of every quarter of the county, where the cause is tried, truth would be readier come at.

Let us strive to be just and honest in all our dealings, one with another; and let truth and justice be sacredly adhered to, in all our courts of judicature! Let us strictly observe the command of the *Gospel*, which saith, "judge not, that ye be not judged." For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged, and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." That is, be not severe and censorious in your judgment upon others, that you do not provoke your heavenly Father to use severity towards you. For in what manner ye judge, and deal with others, whether with candour, mercy, and charity; or with severity and rigour, in the same manner

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will

will God, when he comes to judgment, deal with you.

LVIII. *Consider the End of all your ACTIONS, and you will never do amiss.*

IT is the want of this serious reflection that occasions so many misfortunes to happen in this life. But what is of far greater importance, the consequences attending the next. Should not we blame any person, who through his unthinking, careless, or unpremeditated actions, brought himself to distress, or beggary? But what can we think of him who, through his inconsiderate practices, runs the risk of forfeiting eternal happiness?

It then behoves us all seriously to consider, before we act any thing, what will be the end thereof. So doing would paint all our actions in their proper colours; it would not only prevent us from splitting on those rocks where too many of our unfortunate brethren have been cast away; but would safely conduct us to that haven where we should all wish to be.

LIX.

LIX. *MEN keep a better ACCOUNT of
their MONEY than their TIME.*

AS time and tide will wait for no man, we ought not to lose the opportunity, when offered. The man of affluence, time often hangs heavy on his hand, though he finds little to spare, to provide for a future state. Men of indolence and pleasure have never a day to spare, but put off the care of their souls till to-morrow. To-morrow is the time when all our actions are to be rectified; but let us never put off that till to-morrow, that we can do to-day; for we are uncertain what to-morrow may bring forth. The time we live ought not to be computed by the number of years, but by the use we have made of them. Would not we think that tradesman careless, who never could spare time to settle his books, to know what good or ill he had done? But what must we think of him, who can spare no time to settle his accounts with God, and to know how his case stands with him?

Let the man of affluence spare a little time, for reading the scriptures, or some
K 2 good

good authors ; then he would be ready to relieve the needy, comfort the afflicted and advise the ignorant ; then his riches would be a blessing, because he would enliven the hearts of all around him. Let the man of indolence, and the man of pleasure, settle their accounts with God to-day, this would soon convince them of their dilatory delays and follies ; this would immediately make them sociable friends, agreeable companions, and chearful and ready assistants, to their distressed brethren.

LX. *If they hear not MOSES, and the PROPHETS, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.*

THESE words were the expressions of *Abraham* to the rich glutton in the Gospel, then in torments, who had the mortification to see poor *Lazarus* afar off, in *Abraham's* bosom, in perfect bliss, and happiness ; which occasioned his address to him, in order to let *Lazarus* go only to dip the tip of his finger in water, to cool his tongue ; for he was tormented in that flame.

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But he mildly and parentally tells him, that it was impossible ; for there could not be any alteration in their then fixed state, in order to benefit each other ; at the same time bidding him remember his misconduct in life. Which saying occasioned another request, that he would send him to forewarn his brethren, fearing they might come to the same place of torment. But that was refused also, by telling him, that if they would not hear *Moses* and the *Prophets*, neither would they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

It were greatly to be wished, that this parable might be seriously laid to heart, by all ranks of people. For it informs us that all worldly riches and grandeur are as nothing in the eyes of God, except we do good with them. That the poor, who have lived religiously while on earth, are sure to be rewarded after death, with incomprehensible bliss ; and the souls of the rich, who forget to make a good use of their riches, punished with inconceivable torment. That their states are unalterably fixed after death ; so that it is in vain to hope for any end of their misery, who are miserable ; and unreasonable to fear any
change

change of their prosperity, who are happy. Moreover, if such proofs as we Christians enjoy by the light of the Gospel, (far superior to Moses and the Prophets) will not convince us to lead a godly life, neither would we be persuaded though one rose from the dead.

LXI. *The PARABLE of the TALENTS.*

THE blessed Son of God compares the kingdom of heaven to a man travelling into a far country, who called his servants and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, according to their several abilities, and then took his journey. Now, he that had received five talents improved them to other five; and he that had two, gained other two; but he that had one, went and hid it in the earth, and made no improvement of it.

From this parable is described the manner of life we ought to lead, by a representation of the number of talents given us; for all the gifts, whether of nature or of
grace

grace, which we enjoy, are bestowed on us for our master's service; to whom they properly belong, in promoting his interest and glory, and that he will reward us accordingly. And as for the slothful servant, who made no use of his talent, he exactly expresses the thoughts of wicked men, who never trouble their heads with a future day of reckoning. But let the punishment of this idle servant sink deep into their minds; for God will cast all such unprofitable servants into outer darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

LXII. *MAN'S HAPPINESS in this WORLD can proceed from no other MAXIMS, but suppressing his DESIRES.*

WHILE we are in this world, we are not only surrounded with, but subject to innumerable temptations, which, if we suffer ourselves to partake of, would soon make us deviate from the paths of virtue. We are all more or less captivated with some follies or other, but with serious application they may be subdued; because,
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on reflection, they have no lasting duration; nor will they bear the least scrutinizing thereon. Ask but the libertine, what pleasure he can have in repeating his follies? perhaps he may tell you, that he cannot be at the pains of curbing his inclinations, or perhaps, he has not yet considered the dangerous consequences attending them.

Seeing then that we are all free agents, let us not make use of that noble prerogative to our ruin; but let us, in youth-hood, strive to fight through those innumerable temptations with valour; lest our habituating ourselves too long to those alluring pleasures, make the struggle more difficult to be overcome; for if we will not suppress our desires, before we are totally ensnared by them, we shall neither be happy in this world, nor in that which is to come.

LXIII. *KNOW THY-SELF*

SELF-KNOWLEDGE is one of the noblest duties incumbent on man. Yet that knowledge is not so seriously considered,

sidered, as it ought to be. How ready are we to pry into the works of nature! Yet how regardless of ourselves, the head of nature's workmanship! How quickly do we see the imperfections of others; yet how blind to our own! How readily do we condemn others, for a flagrant offence; when, at the same time, we are committing greater offences ourselves!

Let learning and knowledge be more diligently sought for, than riches and honour; then they will teach us to eschew evil, and do good; know virtue and attain unto it. Then we shall be ready to forgive our fellow creatures; because we know we have need of forgiveness ourselves. They will also inform us, how to make use of the good things of this life, so as not to abuse ourselves thereby, and to be in perfect charity with all men. Then shall we have procured such a share of knowledge, as will not only make us live comfortably here, but happy hereafter.

LXIV. *LEADING an INACTIVE or RE-
CLUSE LIFE, is contrary to the LAWS
of GOD and MAN.*

AT the creation, God commanded our first parents to be fruitful, to multiply, and replenish the earth; by this precept, man was meant to be sociable, and industrious; for without that exertion of our active powers, the earth could not have been overspread, and our blessed Redeemer never spent his time privately, save when at prayers; but was continually exerting his prerogative in instructing or doing good to his fellow creatures, either in the house of God or in the streets. How then can they who shut themselves up in a nunnery, or cloister, get over these injunctions? Moreover our great Apostle tells us, that we must, through much tribulation, enter into the kingdom of God. Now, were all mankind inclinable to lead a recluse life, there would be an end of the creation immediately.

I can give no better reply to this subject, than a great writer before me has done, for he says, “When he sees a man boldly forcing

forcing his way through this world of troubles, resolutely outfacing every difficulty, and steadily going on in the duties of his station, and gloriously acquitting his charge through poverty and distress, he looks upon such a one, to be the delight of men, the joy of angels, and the beloved of God; inasmuch as he lives like a man, behaves himself like a reasonable creature, and stands to the post that God has fixed him in. So sure as there is a God, just and good," adds he, "shall this man be rewarded at last, as a faithful servant of his heavenly master."

LXV. *A MOURNING SUIT too often the Contents of a JOYFUL HEART.*

IN this age, it is customary for almost all ranks of people, to put on a mourning dress for the death of any near relation; and though in such modes of apparel, we too frequently find those in joyful spirits, who have had a fine estate, or a large sum of money left them. Why so much dissimulation, when in our hearts we are joyful? Or what is worse, perhaps thought

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that they lived too long; what a scene of mockery is here! But some scenes more shocking have exhibited themselves in these realms; private murder, assassination, or poison, have been made use of in order to come at estates, or properties, before God was pleased to bestow them; and that may perhaps be but of a short duration; for such vile practices will scarce go unpunished in this life.

It is requisite, that the death of a relation, or correspondent, should occasion serious thoughts; as we are uncertain, how soon it may be our fate. But, according to the duties of religion, we ought rather to rejoice than mourn that God has been pleased to deliver them out of the miseries of this troublesome world.

LXVI. *VAIN GLORY and BOASTING.*

THIS has been a practice prevalent in all ages, and still too much persevered in. The greatest and best of men have not been exempt from it. *David*, though a man after God's own heart, was not free from it; his numbering the people, as well

as his expressions in saying "I shall never be moved, thou Lord, of thy goodness, hast made my hill so strong." How much did the great apostle St. *Peter* boast of his zeal and love to his lord and master, when only a very few hours after, he denied that he knew the man. In this age we frequently boast of what we have acquired, and puff ourselves up with pride and vain glory, of our possessing dignities, titles, riches, and honours.

As boasting then is so detestable a crime, it must be highly displeasing to God, as it is so repugnant to that poverty of spirit recommended by Christ in the beginning of his sermon on the mount, and by all his apostles.—Let no man therefore boast of his health, wealth, knowledge, or friends, as he knoweth not how soon he may be deprived of them; for there are no accidents that have befallen one person, but may befall another; therefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.

LXVII. *The Beauty and Recreation of a
FLOWER GARDEN.*

THOUGH Beauty is captivating, in whatever shape it appears, more or less to all people; yet we find few captivated by the works of nature in the flower-garden, the shrubbery, or the meadow.—The fine artist is extolled in what profession soever; but particularly the sculptor and painter, when they have equalled nature in some decent degree: but how few observe the delicacies of an auricula, rose, or carnation, which not only strike the eye with their beauty, but the breast with their fragrance and smell, not to be imitated by man.—This surely must be great inconsistency in us, by extolling the workmanship of our fellow mortals, and looking so slightly, or hardly noticing the finger of the deity, in every beautiful plant and flower about us.

As gardening is not only a beautiful, but useful employment, and one of the most innocent delights in human life, and as nature exceeds art in all her actions, it would be very recreative to sedentary people

people, to employ their leisure hours in propagating a plant or a flower; it would not only banish melancholy, but create health. Some excuse themselves by being ignorant of such employments; but what will not an assiduous mind overcome! If we are determined to involve ourselves in ignorance, idleness, or dissipated pleasure, how should any thing be attained by us! We cannot go to heaven on a downy bed. Moreover, the more we trace and view the perfections and beauties of nature, the more we must love and adore the great and beautiful creator of all things.

LXVIII. *NATIONAL SPIRIT and STRENGTH impaired by NATIONAL CORRUPTION.*

IN perusing the histories of ancient empires, we find them improving, and continuing in their summit of glory so long as they continued to correct vice, and promote virtue. It frequently happens, in all states, that the improvement thereof increaseth riches, and riches frequently create pride, follies, and immoderate pleasures,

fures, more or less in all people. How far this example prevails, is evidently seen, in all parts of the kingdom. How ready are we to cry out, that the follies of the age are increased; but how few strive to remedy the grievance? Every man can readily see other peoples errors better than his own; and the inferior class of mankind are frequently exclaiming against their superiors, when they themselves, are copying their actions to the utmost of their power.

Would mankind in general but survey their own actions, and correct their own follies, but more particularly the superior part of mankind, (who ought to be an example to the inferior sort) it would be the greatest means of checking vice and immorality, that could be pursued. Yet all the assisting powers both of Church and State, should join hand in hand in the great cause of improving the national spirit and strength, by punishing vice, and rewarding virtue.

LXIX. *A Fault in PARENTS in bringing up their CHILDREN, to such PROFES- SIONS, as they are not qualified to undertake; or the Parents able to assist them therein.*

IT behoves all parents, to provide some calling for their children, that they may get their livelihood honestly, and become useful members of society. The first thing studied should be their genius; which will soon be discovered by those who have the care of their education. It is a maxim prevailing, in many parts of the world, that children must be brought up in their father's trade; but quite different maxims are prevalent in this kingdom. Advowsons to livings in the church, as well as posts in the army, are purchased by many for their children to enjoy, when perhaps not properly adopted for them. Besides, it is customary for a man of property to say, that one of his sons shall be a Doctor of *Divinity*, another of *Law*, and another of *Physic*; when perhaps he may be totally mistaken in all his disposals.

As the first thing to be noticed is their genius, it will then be easy to proceed; but

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perhaps the improving it may occasion a greater sum to be consumed than the father is able to procure ; yet there are not wanting either public charities, or schools, (especially in the North of England) where learning may be procured at an easy expence by the poorer sort, for their better improvement. We often find the greatest promotions in the state enjoyed by men not of the greatest descent ; and it is not to be wondered at ; because, youths descended from parents who have not large fortunes to give their children, know that they must either exert themselves, or starve ; and that, by improving the talents that God hath given them, to the utmost of their power, these great advancements to riches and honour frequently take place.

LXX. *H O N E S T Y.*

HONESTY is so great a blessing that every one must revere the person that is possessed of it : though we are far too inclinable to care for the man of fortune, when perhaps he may not be deserving of it ; as also the man of fashion, though

though he would not stick at deceiving us when opportunity offered. Where is the man of honesty then to be met with? Does he sit at the helm of state? Or does he command the army or navy? Is he only at the head of the church or law? Or does he sit in the seat of money changers, or merchants? Or is he in trade? Does the mechanic, or husbandman only, enjoy this happy blessing? without a doubt, there are both honest and good men in all stations of life.

Yet if honesty were more strictly inculcated in youth, and deceit and fraud discouraged, we should hear of fewer vexatious suits at law, fewer rogueries and villainies, fewer bankruptcies, fewer deceits in trade and commerce; no forgeries, no swindlers, no puffers, no debauchments, no apologies for vice or Sabbath breaking, no embezzlements of public money, no catch-penny compilations, or sharpening tricks of any kind whatever. Then might we justly conclude that "AN HONEST MAN IS THE NOBLEST WORK OF GOD."

LXXI. *INSTRUCTION and CORRECTION of CHILDREN.*

THE Instruction and Correction of Children are two of the principal duties incumbent on parents. How then can these perform the task, who, as soon as their child is born, must be sent to a nurse, and there left to the capricious humours of a careless and unthinking hireling! There is a great care required also in their cloathing, food and exercise; as well as nursing; which I find no where better treated of, than in Dr. *Buchan's* Domestic Medicine. Yet an essential care is required from their tutors, and schoolmasters; as there are many parents whose callings occasion them to be frequently from home. How often do we find children swearing, lying, and tyrannically cruel, in killing frogs, butterflies, and birds! Without any dread or mercy. What must this be owing to, but want of correction and better instruction? Now, these misdemeanors, going unnoticed or uncorrected, soon occasion worse things to follow; as the breaking of orchards, pulling the quills out of geese wings, fraudulently

duently gaming, tricking, and cheating each other ; till, at last, they become complete libertines and reprobates. Then the laws of the land are obliged to correct and punish.

It is very prudent and becoming every mother to nurse her own child, if health or constitution will admit ; but if not, to hire a healthy nurse into the house ; then she would have, at all times, the inspection as well as correction of the child when required. It would be very prudent also for all those who have the care of bringing up children narrowly to inspect, as well as correct, every disagreeable action, as soon as discovered ; and not to indulge them with too much money in their pockets ; for it is too frequently thrown away in baubles, toys, and unnecessary articles which, in the present age, superabound.

I cannot conclude this essay better than repeating the advice, that the wisest of men hath given us, for he says, “ That foolishness is bound in the heart of a child, but
 “ the rod of correction shall drive it from
 “ him. Chasten thy son, while there is
 “ hope, and let not thy soul spare for his
 “ crying. He that spareth his rod, hateth
 “ his

“ his son ; but he that loveth him, chast-
 “ eneth him betimes. Withhold not cor-
 “ rection from the child ; for if thou beat-
 “ est him with a rod, he shall not die.
 “ Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and
 “ shalt deliver his soul from hell. The rod
 “ and reproof give wisdom ; but a child
 “ left to himself, bringeth his mother to
 “ shame. Correct thy son, and he shall
 “ give thee rest ; yea he shall give delight
 “ unto thy soul. Train up a child in the
 “ way he should go ; and, when he is old,
 “ he will not depart from it.”

LXXII. *AGUR's WISH, or the MIDDLE STATE, most to be ADMIRABLE.*

IT was the worthy wish, of this great and
 good man to beg of God, neither po-
 verty, nor riches ; but to feed him with
 food convenient for him ; “ Left (says he)
 “ I be full and deny thee, and say, who is
 “ the Lord ? Or lest I be poor and steal,
 “ and take the name of my God in vain.”
 Now, it is evident, he saw through the dan-
 gerous consequences attending either ex-
 treme ; and was perfectly sensible that the
 middle

middle state is best calculated for procuring happiness. How different now are the wishes of mankind, and how many are there too eagerly providing for the welfare of the body! But too regardless of the welfare of the soul! Never considering the dangers that riches plunge them into. It is true, both extremes are liable to danger; and if we banish humility, or submission to the will of God, totally out of our thoughts, we shall undoubtedly err, in whatsoever state we are.

It is prudent that we should endeavour, in the prime of life, to support ourselves, and families; and should it please God to bless those honest endeavours, in gaining a decent fortune, let us not puff ourselves up with pride or ambition, by forgetting our great benefactor, and our indigent brethren. But, if our endeavours should prove unsuccessful, let us be content, remain satisfied, and know, that if we persevere honestly through life, in doing our duty, God will reward us with eternal bliss hereafter.

LXXIII. DANGEROUS CONSEQUENCES attending not BRIDLING the TONGUE.

THE tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity; it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature, and is set on fire of hell. The innumerable instances of discord and disagreements, prevailing amongst mankind, principally arise from not keeping in bounds that unruly member; which, the Apostle tells us, cannot be tamed. Differences will arise amongst mankind by casualty, or some other unforeseen cause; yet keeping in reasonable bounds our tongue would soon make them subside; and then they might be amicably settled; for *Solomon* justly observes, that a mild answer turneth away wrath; but grievous words stir up anger. It is needless to expostulate what mischief hath ensued, by passionate and hasty expressions, when those that have been over-teen in repeating them, have afterwards repented of their rashness and folly; but a word once spoken, cannot be recalled.

Let passion and revenge be corrected in
children

children as soon as discovered ; for they are early imbibed ; then, when they advance to riper years, they will be careful how they utter any thing that may give offence ; as they are perfectly informed from scripture, that he who offendeth not in words, the same must be a perfect man, and able also to bridle his whole body.

LXXIV. *BAPTISM and the SUPPER of the LORD.*

THESE two great Sacraments (instituted by the Son of God) which our Church hath appointed all Christians to partake of, are so well authenticated, that he must be deemed an infidel that totally rejects them. When our blessed Redeemer was thirty years of age, he accepted the former ; and the evening before he was crucified, he established the latter. The first, probably, was instituted in the room of circumcision ; and the latter in the room of the paschal Lamb offered at the Jewish Passover, as he sacrificed himself in its room. Now it may be disputed, at what age baptism ought to be performed. The

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primitive

primitive Christians thought it ought to be performed early, even at or before the time of circumcision ; and our Church observes the same practice, and instituted sponsors, to inspect and see that the child was properly initiated in the Christian faith, till he came at a proper age to take that charge on himself. Now we find, on record, that baptism was of ancient date ; for the Egyptians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, and other nations, before they initiated any into their mysteries, or sacred rites, ordered them to be first purified, by dipping their whole bodies in water ; and John the Baptist performed the same ceremony, by initiating his followers into the doctrine of Christianity, at which time the blessed Jesus partook of the same. And afterwards his Apostles performed the same service to all that embraced Christianity. And the Lord's supper, which he so strenuously recommended all his followers to partake of, was instituted purposely to keep in remembrance his death and passion, till he came again to judge the world ; and also as a declaration of our belief, that his suffering on the cross was submitted to, purely to make an atonement for the sins of the whole world ; which
benefit

benefit all people have a right to, who believe in the commands of his holy gospel.

Since then the blessed Son of God hath done such great things for us, ought not all Christians to receive this holy sacrament in a more devout and humble manner, than ever the Jews commemorated their passover? (which was, and is performed with great solemnity) as there is no comparison betwixt the one ceremony and the other. Our bodies and souls were redeemed from the power of sin and Satan; their bodies only from Egyptian slavery.

LXXV. *We shall carry NOTHING with us out of THIS LIFE, but either a GOOD or BAD CONSCIENCE.*

COULD mankind but seriously reflect that there is no end of the joys of the blessed, as well as no end of the torments of the wicked, it would occasion far more serious thoughts to take place; for it is an established maxim, that the end of a dissolute life is most commonly a desperate death; and evil beginnings have frequently wretched endings. Indeed, how should the mind that is set on earthly things, ever

have any relish for heavenly things? For a great many people are more careful in getting money than in keeping a good conscience.

Let us then have a strict regard over all our actions; and let us keep the word *everlasting*, continually in our thoughts; it will not only make us remember from whence we came, but whither we ought to go. It will also banish all earthly pleasures out of our thoughts, and assist us in running the race that is set before us. Then if our conscience do not condemn us, we shall so run, that we may be sure of obtaining the everlasting prize of happiness and glory.

LXXVI. *Set thy HOUSE in ORDER, for thou shalt DIE and not LIVE.*

WOULD mankind but suffer themselves to reflect on this serious sentence, it would be a means to banish innumerable animosities and troubles that disturb them, as well as to keep in their mind this awful injunction. But how few trouble themselves with this important thought? The good king *Hezekiah*, when he

he was informed by the prophet to set his house in order, for he was to die and not live, wept sore. Which shews how tremendous the thoughts of death are, even to good men; as there is no person living but what hath sinned, more or less. The great uncertainty of death's approach should instruct men, not to be tardy in settling their concerns, as many accidents frequently happen to prevent them. How disagreeable is it to see younger children deprived of their fortunes, when the heir at law rolls in opulence.

Think then more seriously on this dreadful sentence, ye careless ones; and shudder when you repeat it; for, should the great and terrible God call you to account (before you have settled your affairs) in the midst of your follies, (as you frequently see those catastrophes happen) what must then be the contents? If we should place death, judgment, and the miseries of a future state more frequently before our eyes, it would make us live every day, as if it were to be our last.

LXXVII. *The PARABLE of the LOST SHEEP, and the PRODIGAL SON.*

WHILE the blessed Jesus was eating with, and preaching to, the publicans and sinners, the scribes and pharisees murmured that he should be so condescending as to partake of their favours, or instruct so wicked a set of people as they. Now, in order to inform those hypocrites of their mistaken notions, he lays before them the parable of the lost sheep, and prodigal son; which had they rightly understood, they might clearly have seen, that through their arrogant pride and unbelief they were going to be rejected, and the Gentiles chosen. Moreover, he further tells them the great necessity of his so doing; that as God is the father both of Jews and Gentiles, of the obedient, as well as disobedient, he had no pleasure that any should perish, but that all might have eternal life, if they would hear and observe his precepts; for it was the sick that wanted a physician, and not those stiff-necked Jews, who thought themselves whole. Moreover, he tells them, he that converteth a sinner, shall himself cover a multitude of sins; and that there
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is more joy in heaven over one person that repenteth, than over ninety and nine just persons that need no repentance.

Let us not then be stubborn (like the unbelieving Jews) in rejecting the commands of the holy Jesus; lest his saving grace be taken from us, as it was from them; but let us repent in time, (like the prodigal son) then we shall be taken into favour again, and assuredly partake of the inheritance with the saints in light.

LXXVIII. *The DISEASES of the BODY may be CURED, but the MALADY of the MIND can meet with no RELIEF but in the WORD of GOD.*

WE frequently find that a disorder of the body (when contracted by any dissolute, extravagant, or irregular action) often brings on a disorder of the mind, which undoubtedly occasioned the wise man to say, That the spirit of a man is able to bear up under its infirmities; but a wounded spirit who can bear? In order then for the body's preservation, a careless and indolent life must be avoided, and exercise
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and action regularly pursued ; which is becoming all ranks of people, and which the scriptures recommend ; for Solomon bids the sluggard go to the ant, consider her ways, and be wise. And the apostle says, He that will not work, should not eat ; therefore it is evident, (from reason only) that the preservation of health can neither be acquired, nor kept, without a constant regularity of employment, which we continually see in children ; for their whole day is spent in a round of actions and amusements.

If the body then enjoys a good state of health, by a constant and regular set of actions and amusements, the mind will readily feel these good effects, and will soon create a sound mind in a sound body. Then nothing is required for their mutual continuance, but a perseverance in doing our duty to God and man, according to the utmost of our abilities.

LXXIX. HUMILITY.

A Humble and meek temper is so well pleasing to God, that it was the first principle blessing commended by our Redeemer, in his sermon on the mount. It is so contradictory to the delights and pleasures of this world, that it setteth no value on them; yet it is the easiest road to dignity and honour. It is no commendation to be humble in adversity; but in prosperity, that man is truly called great, whose spirit is humble. Moreover, humility teacheth us to rule our affections, and keep all our actions in a proper mein; for as a plain garment best adorneth a beautiful woman, so is humility the greatest ornament of the mind.

Yet what is the most pleasing prospect of all, it secureth our happiness here, and everlasting bliss hereafter; for the blessed Son of God tells us, that he that humbleth himself, as a little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of Heaven.

LXXX. *The CHRISTIAN's MIRROR,
in the Old Testament's Commands.*

1 **W**E are commanded to have no other gods but one. Are not riches and honours, gods that too many adore?

2. We are not to make any graven image, of any kind, to worship as God. Do we not make idols of our too much favourite passions and pleasures, and worship them instead of the true God?

3. We are commanded not to take the name of our God in vain. How many perjured oaths are there made, as well as taking his name in vain in common conversation?

4. We are commanded to keep holy the Sabbath day, and no work to be done thereon, neither by ourselves, servants, nor horses. How many are there who spare more time for recreations and pleasures, on that day, than any other?

5. We are commanded to honour and obey our parents. How many parents do we see in distress, when their children have it in their power to relieve them?

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6. We are commanded to do no murder. How many shorten their days by suicide, intemperance, and folly?

7. We are commanded not to commit adultery. Though we escape the grosser acts of adultery and fornication, yet, have we not conceived lust in our hearts, nor offended by lascivious and wanton expressions?

8. We are commanded not to steal. Have we not been guilty of stealing? Have we never defrauded, or cheated our neighbour, or wasted our own property by depriving our children thereof? For what we enjoy is only lent us by God.

9. We are commanded not to bear false witness against our neighbour. Though we may not have condemned any falsely; yet, have we accused none falsely, nor concealed the truth, when justice required us to give evidence thereof?

10. We are commanded not to covet any thing that is our neighbour's. Have we never had any longing desire for any part of our neighbour's property, so as to come at it by any unlawful means? Or have we, in any shape, envied his prosperity?

LXXXI. *The CHRISTIAN's MIRROR,
in the New Testament's Commands.*

1. **W**E are commanded to love the Lord our God, with all our heart, and our neighbour as ourselves. How neglectful are we in our devotions to God, either public or private; though we know he is continually pouring his blessings upon us; and if our love to God is so slight, what must it be to our neighbour?

2. We are commanded to pray daily to God for our subsistence. How careless then, when even at victuals, not to give him thanks?

3. We are commanded to forgive, as we would be forgiven. How then come so many frivolous law suits, bickerings, and animosities amongst us?

4. We are commanded frequently to pray to God, that we may not be led into temptation. How little do we ourselves strive to shun temptations?

5. We are commanded to love our enemies. How difficult must that be to him that does not love his neighbours?

6. We are commanded to lay up our treasure in Heaven, and not on earth, where
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it hath no security. How do those observe this precept, who trust in their riches, and make the good things of this world their too much favourite passions and delights?

7. We are commanded to let our communication be YEA, YEA, and NAY, NAY; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil. How little is this precept regarded, when, in common conversation, flattery and dissimulation are too frequently practised, and lying indulged?

8. We are commanded to abstain from all appearance of evil. How do those observe this precept, that are frequently committing evil actions?

9. We are commanded to keep in remembrance our Saviour's death and passion, by frequently receiving the holy communion. How few do we find partake of that heavenly institution?

10. We are commanded to improve our talent, and not bury it in the earth, like the careless servant, that we may be ready to meet our Judge at any hour of the night. How careless are we in the improvement of all Christian duties, which are the only preparative for death?

LXXXII. *RAGE or ANGER.*

ANGER is so heinous a vice, that our blessed Redeemer tells us, that it shall not go unpunished in a future state. The law (says he) forbade murder, under pain of death; but I say unto you, whosoever shall encourage rash, or causeless anger, or passion, shall be punished by the Almighty in another life, in just proportion, as it was indulged. Moreover, what dangerous consequences attend the passionate man in this life? For anger encouraged, begetteth wrath; and wrath seeketh revenge, and revenge is not satisfied, till perhaps murder, or some other dismal consequences, ensue. Would we not call that man imprudent, who put to sea in the violence of a storm, or who, in his rage, committed such horrible offences, as could not easily be atoned? Encouraged anger may be compared to a small spark of fire, which by heedlessness in extinguishing, soon doeth great mischief. Besides, what good advice can we expect from an angry man? for rash judgment frequently maketh haste to repentance.

Let cool reflection banish this two-headed monster from the thoughts of every one of us;

us; let us seriously consider, before we speak, or act any thing; and as seriously know, that God both sees and hears all our actions and expressions; lest we trample under our feet his mercy, and totally quench the grace he hath given us; "For the discretion of a man deferreth his anger, and it is his glory to pass over a transgression." "Let us not be overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

LXXXIII. *Take no anxious THOUGHT for TO-MORROW; sufficient unto the DAY is the EVIL thereof.*

MANKIND in general, being too eagerly concerned in making provisions for earthly things, occasioned frequent reproofs to be given them, both in the Old Testament and New. The blessed Jesus does not omit expostulating seriously with his hearers, on this great folly; and recommends that the kingdom of Heaven, and its righteousness, should be sought first, and then all the reasonable necessities of this life should be added thereto. And he further says, That as God is the father and supporter

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supporter of the universe, could he see man in distress, (his noblest creature) when he did his duty? No. He tells us, that he knoweth what every man hath need of. Do not we see, or hear, daily proofs of this in every part of the creation?

To convince us further, he lays before us the dangerous consequences attending our too eager pursuit after riches; for how do you know, adds he, but your soul may be required of you this night? And then whose shall all those riches be, that you have acquired?

Our blessed Lord does not prohibit us from getting our living with honesty, prudence and industry; but recommends it; yet, at the same time, he requests us to make the greatest preparations for a future state; as the one is short and transient, the other everlasting. Therefore let us seriously reflect whether ought more to be regarded.

LXXXIV. *It is HARD for a MAN to LIVE WELL, but very easy to DIE ILL.*

FAR too many lead a heedless and careless life, on account of the great restraint required, in all ranks of people, to live well. The being born again, (or becoming a new creature) is so serious a task, that it requires the resolution of a hero, in order to attain that birth. It was the expression of *Balaam* to wish to die the death of the righteous; but, had he consented to lead the life of the righteous? That person is not worthy to live, that taketh not care how to live well.

Would those, that abound in riches, but ask themselves what good ambition can do them? Would the commanders of armies or navies ask themselves what good it can do them to be biassed by filthy lucre or timidity, in slackening their exertions for their king and country; would the men of the law ask themselves what good an extravagant fee can do them; would the clergy, who reside not on their cures, consider their neglect of duty; would the magistrates consider the dangerous consequences of executing justice with partiality;

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would the jurors and evidences, in all our courts of justice, consider the heinousness of perjury; would the commercial part of mankind ask themselves what service riches can be of, got by extortion, or any unfair practice; nay, would all mankind, in what station soever they are placed, but exert their faculties, and act as becometh men, then we might both live well, and die well.

LXXXV. *The wicked* EXAMPLE *of a*
FATHER is a great Provocation to a SON
to Sin.

EXAMPLE is far beyond precept, in all those that have the charge of others committed to them; as well from the king to his subject; the clergyman to his flock; but more particularly the father to his children. How ready are we to catch every vice from our superiors! Much readier then, a child from its father, who is frequently hearing and seeing his expressions and actions. For it may with veracity be asserted now, as it was by the prophet to the Jewish nation, that the father hath eaten four grapes,

grapes, and the childrens teeth are set on edge ; for we frequently find many parents encouraging their children in dirty actions.

Till religion and morality be better established, how should those youths (who neither have had a decent share of education given them, nor a good example shewn them) act better? Therefore, it behoveth those who are blessed with riches, to strive with all their might, not only to shew a good example themselves, but assist and forward the promotion of *Sunday Schools*, or other places of education, as they think best adapted to their situations, for the better instruction of their poor neglected brethren.

LXXXVI. *Speak EVIL of no MAN.*

THESE are the words which our great apostle recommended Titus, the first Bishop of the island of Crete, to preach to his hearers ; which expressions, if not seriously considered, are liable to incur a greater share of guilt, than we may generally be aware of. If we know what we report of another to be false, it is downright lying :

if we believe what we report of others to be false, it is slander; or, if what evil we report of others, be really true, and we know it to be so, it is defamation. To think, or speak evil of others, is not only a bad thing, but a sure sign of a bad man; for it is as great a charity, in many cases, to conceal an evil we hear of our neighbour, as it is to relieve him in distress.

In order then to avoid evil-speaking, let us be meek and gentle one towards another, rather putting up with a double wrong, than resenting a single injury. Let us study to be quiet, and to do our own business; let us put away lying, and speak truth one to another, for we are members one of another.

LXXXVII. *Remember LOT's WIFE.*

THE heinous offences that the people of *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah* were guilty of, are to be a standing monument of the Almighty's displeasure, to the end of time. But more particularly *Lot's* wife, who, when she had been positively informed of the cities overthrow, by the angels, could not embrace

embrace that safety she might have accepted along with her husband, and two daughters; but being a Sodomite, probably she was loth to depart, and leave her native country and property behind her; or probably, totally disobedient to the angel's command.

This ought to be a striking lesson of morality to all people; first, in considering that God may take vengeance on incorrigible sinners, in this life, if they be determined to persevere in their wickednesses. And in the next place, let *Lot's* wife be a warning to us all, not to reject the grace of God when offered to us; for though he may not, on every occasion, lay bare his vindictive arm, yet he hath reserved the unjust, however they may escape at present, unto the day of judgment, to be punished.

LXXXVIII. *If thou dost WELL, thou shalt be ACCEPTED; if not, SIN lieth at the DOOR.*

THIS was the answer God gave *Cain*, when he approved of his brother *Abel's* sacrifice, but rejected his; because he did not perform it with that sincerity his brother

brother did. It was a remark, made by the blessed Son of God, between the prayer of the pharisee and the publican in the temple. —The former, puffed up with his own self conceited pride and arrogancy, thought to have recommended himself to God, by his too much exalted notions of his sect, and hating all others; particularly the poor publican. But how was he deceived, when he was informed, that the latter went to his house more justified than the former!

This ought to be a lesson of great instruction to all people, what idea they harbour of any sect or mode of religion; but more particularly those who profess Christianity, who perhaps may be more buoyed up with the name of their profession, than in the performance of the duties it requires; lest the prayers of those nations, who perhaps have not so clear a light as ourselves, be found more acceptable in the eyes of an All-seeing God, than those of a careless and an unthinking Christian.

LXXXIX. *Except a MAN be BORN AGAIN, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of GOD.*

THIS doctrine of regeneration, preached by the blessed Son of God to *Nicodemus*, was so far from being received in its proper sense, that the learned Rabbi was not able, or at least not willing, to enter into the merits of it. I wish this be not the case with those that profess Christianity; for they who have embraced that holy profession from their infancy, as soon as they arrive at maturity, ought to make a total change of their inclinations and actions; which our blessed Redeemer calls being born again. For the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God. Therefore he must be born again, and thoroughly resolved to shake off his follies, and become a new creature.

But as this cannot be done of a sudden; because by natural generation we are not born with the reason and perfections of men, but with the faculty and possibility of attaining these perfections:—therefore, as soon as we become sensible of our errors, let us strive daily to shake them off. For the habits

bits of grace and holiness are not all at once raised to their maturity; but must be gradually nourished to their full measure, by long practice and experience. And then, when we resolve to do our duty, God will give us his holy spirit to assist us therein; for except we strive with all our might to enter in at the strait gate, we shall not be able.

XC. *You cannot serve GOD and MAM-
MON.*

LET these words, my children, be laid seriously to heart; for we cannot serve two masters. If we hate the one, we will love the other; or, if we hold to the one, we will despise the other. This world is divided into two principalities, or powers, which are continually at war one with the other. The kingdom of God, and the kingdom of Satan. The ensigns of God's army are justice, prudence, temperance, and fortitude; which carry along with them, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, hope, charity, and the like. The ensigns of the devil's army are, adultery, fornication,

fornication, lasciviousness, covetousness, ambition, pride, lying, swearing, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, wrath, strife, sedition, emulation, and such like. Now I would willingly ask any person, under whether banner he would enlist himself? Undoubtedly he would say, *Under God's*. Why then does he pursue those vanities and pleasures that the Almighty hates? Until he shake off all his worldly minded actions, and become a new creature, he cannot be a disciple of the blessed Jesus.

In order therefore to be victorious in this noble conflict, we are happy to have the blessed Son of God our chief captain and conductor; who has laid down such rules for us, in his holy gospel, that we cannot fail of success, if we will but fight under his banner; but if we refuse, and will enlist under the devil's banner, we must expect to be punished with him, his angels, and followers in everlasting torments.

XCI. *Do unto all MEN, as you would have them DO to You.*

THE reason why this golden rule, is not so strictly adhered to as it ought, is owing to our lucrative inclinations, and ill natured principles. We ought never to oppress the poor, nor defraud of his hire, the labouring man. The seller ought not to take advantage of the buyer, though he be never so ignorant, but should make it a rule, to fix a moderate price on every article for sale; for, in all our dealings with one another, we ought to be honest and just. We ought to shew no partiality, nor malice one to another; and, if we would but ask ourselves how we should take it if our neighbour did any of these things to us, we should be more willing to lay aside our own covetous inclinations and malicious tempers.

Let me advise my dear children, (as Solomon did his son) that you bind this precept on your fingers, and write it upon the table of your heart; that you may be always ready to hear instruction, and be wise enough not to refuse it; then you will be willing to do unto all men, as you would wish them to do to you.

XCII.

XCH. *STRIVE to ENTER IN at the STRAIT GATE.*

THESSE words are a part of Christ's sermon on the mount, which requires the most serious attention. For he saith, That wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; but strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. Which precepts, just then laid down by him, he knew would be badly relished by the covetous and sensual lovers of the world; because they would not be at the pains to practise them sincerely. For he saith also, That it is not every one that calleth him Lord, who shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven; or even he that prophesieth, or doeth wondrous works in his name; but he that heareth, and receiveth these instructions, and will firmly resist all the temptations of the world, the flesh and the devil. These, says he, are the only few that shall be able to enter in at the strait gate, and receive their rewards, suitable to their steady resolutions.

Let, my children, the weighty expressions,

ons, contained in Christ's sermon on the mount, sink deep into your minds; and as there are but few who will be at the pains to practise them sincerely, if ye have any desire to attain eternal happiness, strive to follow those few, in the narrow path of virtue. For the way to destruction is broad, soft, and easy; and in this the careless multitude walk. But the way to happiness is narrow, and the path of virtue full of thorns and briers; so that a few only deny themselves unlawful pleasures, vanities, and the gaities of the world, that they may be able to walk therein.

XCIII. *HIS BLOOD be on US, and on our CHILDREN.*

THESE were the flagrant expressions of the Jews, on the trial of the blessed Jesus, before *Pontius Pilate*, the Roman governor, who would gladly have set him at liberty; because, on examination, he found no cause of death in him. Therefore, in order to convince them that he had no desire to condemn an innocent person, he sent for water and washed his hands before them

them all, publicly testifying (according to their own laws) that he would have no hand in shedding that innocent blood; which occasioned them to utter, with one voice, that dreadful imprecation of, "His blood be on us, and on our children," O! horrid imprecation indeed! How was this blind multitude infatuated! Now let us seriously reflect what better we should have acted ourselves. The blessed Jesus' birth (though born miraculously) was a mystery to the Jews; all they knew was, that he was born of a mean extraction, and that his parents could not afford to give him a liberal education; no wonder then, that when he entered on his ministry and began to rebuke their rulers without either dread or fear, that so great hatred and antipathy were shewn him. They, undoubtedly were blameable, for not enquiring more strictly into the merits of his proceedings; as the miracles that were performed by him clearly testified from whence he had his power. But according to their supposition, no prophet could arise out of *Galilee* or *Nazareth*, where Jesus was brought up. Therefore they were still in the dark, and feigned odd notions, not only of his miracles, but of his proverbial expressions also; which they could

could not clearly make out, because their eyes were blinded, and their hearts hardened. Now, should an illiterate man, of such birth and trade, as the Jews upbraided Jesus with, but rebuke the *Sanhedrim* of any nation, and expose their secret faults and actions to the view of their fellow-creatures, as severely as the blessed Jesus did the Jewish rulers; what would be the contents? Would not we soon hear the public cry of, away with him! crucify him! crucify him!

Let us not blame then the Jewish rulers, nor the rabble who were instigated by them, for their ignorance in condemning the blessed Jesus; for he not only prayed for his murderers, but told them that to this end he was born, and for this cause he came into the world. Therefore let us strive to correct our follies, and frequently observe the commands of his holy gospel, lest we be found guilty of crucifying the blessed Jesus also.

XCIV. *They are CORRUPT, and become ABOMINABLE in their DOINGS; there is none that DOETH GOOD, no not ONE.*

THESE are the royal Psalmist's sentiments of the degeneracy of mankind, in his age. And our great Apostle, St. Paul, repeats the same words to the Roman nation. Now, if we take them in a prophetic sense, there is none that doeth good, because none can be justified by the law. For neither Jew nor Gentile did their duty, as they ought; for all were under sin. But let us take them in their literal sense, and let us consider the degeneracy of the nations in those times, to whom these expressions were spoken, and we shall find a vitiated and corrupted nature exceeding prevalent.

Let us now apply them to the people of this age; and what inferences can be drawn in their behalf? Do not we find men uncommon eager in pursuing and attaining the good things of this life; but how few do we hear talk of heaven and happiness! Spend the evenings where agreeable, and frequent what company you please; and you will find that riches and possessions, titles and honours, cards and dice, their
glafs

glass and their pleasures, their pastimes and amusements, (nay often indecent expressions) are very much made the topics of conversation. If the royal Psalmist, or our great Apostle, had been either of them living in these our days, I apprehend they would have thought we deserved the same upbraidings.

XCV. *For what is a man PROFITED, if he shall GAIN the whole WORLD, and LOSE his own SOUL; or, what shall a Man give in EXCHANGE for his SOUL?*

THE state of everlasting bliss, and misery, should be seriously taken to heart, by every individual. How often does the blessed Jesus warn us of our carelessness on that great and momentous duty! and how often does he reprimand us for our too eager pursuit after riches, by asking us what benefit it would be to gain the greatest honours and riches, and in the pursuit, (or improper use thereof) cast ourselves away? Ought not the parable of the rich man, who pulled down his barns to build greater,

greater, sufficiently guard us against the dangerous effects, and short duration of riches? And ought not the heedlessness of the five foolish virgins to remind us of the carelessness of our duty? Should not our blessed Redeemer's reprehension of Martha's eagerness, about the things of this life, caution us also? nay, the end of almost all his discourses centers in guarding us against covetousness; for he tells us that a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

Seeing then, that the sole view of our actions should be to gain eternal happiness, let us take particular care that we set not our affections too much on earthly things; for we know not how soon the Supreme Judge may require a strict account of our stewardship. Let us take particular care that our vessels be constantly trimmed with oil, ready to meet our bridegroom whenever he shall demand our attendance; lest we enjoy the fate of the five foolish virgins, and be excluded Heaven, for the careless neglect of our duty.

XCVI. Keep INNOCENCY, and take heed unto the thing that is RIGHT; for that shall bring a Man PEACE at the last.

THE royal Psalmist, in these few expressions, hath summed up the whole duty of man, with the happy consequences attending it, in our last moments. The most illiterate person is not insensible when he is doing amiss; neither is he ignorant of being made accountable for his follies; or why should fear ever oppress his mind, if he had no dread of punishment? There is not that hardened wretch living, but who, at some interval or other, is pricked with remorse of conscience. The frequent occasions of wickedness are the non-government of our passions; which, without controul, carry us to extremes, from which we cannot sometimes extricate ourselves, without committing greater crimes, in order to evade corporal punishment; which, it is doubtful, often terminates in loss of both body and soul. For all extremes are dangerous, and one inconsiderate action, frequently begets another.

Let us take particular care then, that we be just and honest in all our dealings. Let

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us keep our tongue from evil, and our lips that they speak no guile. Let whatever passion we are prone to, be curbed, before it has got too great an ascendancy over us. Let our recreations and amusements be innocent, and let us not be lovers of pleasure, more than lovers of God.

Let our glass be taken with moderation, and let our incomes calculate our expences; that our time and money be not superfluously thrown away. Let us not imitate the actions of our superiors, neither in dress, diet, nor amusements; but let every man consider well his station, and act prudently, as becometh him in that station; then, by our thus observing to keep innocency, and taking heed to the thing that is right, we shall be sure to find both peace and happiness at the last; for innocency is an assured comfort, both in life and death.

XCVII. *As for ME, and my HOUSE, we will SERVE the LORD.*

THESE were the resolutions of *Joshua*, the leader of the Israelites, when almost the whole body of his countrymen had revolted to idolatry. Which shews the

greatness and goodness of his heart, amongst such a corrupted and degenerate race of people. There have not been wanting such worthies in all ages, who have boldly declared their intentions to serve the Lord, even in the midst of Paganism. How happy then should the people of Christendom think themselves, who have the scriptures for their guide! Yet how apt (in this enlightened age) are we to follow a multitude to do evil! The pleasures of this life are so bewitching and enticing, that very many pursue them. It is a sort of plausible obedience, and seems to carry with it the appearance of religious principles, to follow the cry of the multitude, and join with them in the broad path; though it leadeth to destruction; thinking their actions cannot be heinous, when so many of their superiors, and equals, tread in the same steps.

But let not the errors and vices of the age plead universality in their favour, though never so great a number follow after them. Is it too true, that man will be thought singular, who opposes the ridiculous customs and follies of the generality; but what man, to whom virtue is pleasing, can please the multitude? I should not (my children) have urged this advice with so much

much eagerness; but when vice and wickedness increase, virtue and piety decrease. How many do we see flocking to play houses, or expensive recreations? But how few go to church, to hear the word of God at no expence? Religion may be learned at an easy rate; but folly and pleasure are often purchased at an extravagant one. If we will follow a multitude to do evil, we must abide by the consequences; for, if we partake of their crimes, we must partake of their punishments also. There are none so blind as those that will not see; nor none so deaf as those that will not hear; nor none so worthless as those, who reject the pious instructions of their parents.

XCVIII. *THORNS also, and THISTLES, shall it bring forth to thee. In the SWEAT of thy FACE shalt thou eat Bread, till thou return to the GROUND.*

THIS was the curse that God laid on the earth for our first parents transgression in Paradise. Yet whilst they were obedient to their Maker's command, it produced them every delicacy spontaneously, without

without their assistance. Now, how naturally do we, their offspring, blame them for this disobedience ; when, had we been in their situation, we should have been guilty of the said offence ourselves. Let us now consider how liable, and ready we are to eat this forbidden fruit. Take but a survey of the actions of those men, who have not occasion to get their bread by the sweat of their brow, and, on inspection, they will be found frequently eating the forbidden fruit. Nay, on serious examination, we shall all be detected of pilfering the forbidden fruit, more or less. Therefore we are all equally guilty of this curse as our first parents, and must justly conclude that the Almighty's decree was fixed on the firmest foundation, for our future welfare and happiness.

Let us then be industrious, and strive to get our bread by the sweat of our brow ; but if Providence hath blessed us with a sufficiency, without that toil, let us not be idle, but study to get wisdom and instruction, along with our innocent amusements ; and let us not forget to be frequently doing good, according to the affluence that God hath blessed us with ; then we shall be ready to contribute to the necessities of those, who must be drudges, and who must cultivate
this

this earth, in order to keep in subjection those thorns, thistles, and other noxious weeds, which, without care and industry, would soon over-run it.

XCIX. *Though the Fig Tree shall not blossom, neither shall Fruit be in the Vine; though the Labour of the Olive shall fail, and the Fields shall yield no Meat; though the Flocks shall be cut off from the Fold, and there shall be no Herd in the Stalls; yet will I Rejoice in the LORD, I will Joy in the GOD of my SALVATION.*

THIS is the resolution of the Prophet, and it has, and ever will be the practice of all good men to rely totally on Providence; assuredly believing, that he will direct all things to their future benefit, even in the most calamitous situations in life.—How often do we find inclement seasons frequently frustrating the industrious husbandman, as well as various mechanics, from pursuing their lawful callings! Repining then at the dispensations of Providence only increases our distresses, and often frustrates our welfare and happiness. The Almighty

mighty disposer of all things doeth what seemeth him best, either for our correction or instruction ; and though it be a disappointment to our worldly wishes ; yet, if we would rightly consider it, it is meant for our good.

Let us guard ourselves then, never to be ruffled under any disappointments, neither by the frustrations of Providence, nor our own neglect ; but strive to prevent, for the future, that carelessness ; let us not repine at the lateness or inclemency of the seasons ; for we see them frequently vary in this island ; let not the husbandman slacken his plough, for the sake of the cold ; and let him not lose seed time when opportunity offers. Let him do things with consideration, and trust in Providence for success.— Yet though *Paul* plant and *Apollōs* water, it is God that must give the increase. But the industrious man may securely rest in hopes of satisfaction ; for it is the sluggard, the careless, and the extravagant man, that will be always in want.

C. *The Uncertainty, Instability, and Weakness of HUMAN NATURE.*

HOW vain a thing is man! how frail, how brittle!
How great he seems to be, but yet how little!

His time on earth's a span, yet full of folly,

So fickle still is he, and melancholy.

He's too compar'd to grass, soon cut and dried,

Yet still so foolish he, though often tried,

He constantly doth see the short duration

Of earthly things, from high to th' lowest station.

Yet heedless of his end, and full of pleasure,

He makes his Heav'n on Earth, to hoard up treasure.

Though sickness stalk around, and death appeareth

In ev'ry place he goes, yet he ne'er feareth

The name of that great God, who he's offending,

Though he his favours still on man is sending.

Would frail man make but wisdom his dictator,

She soon would learn him how to fear his Maker.

The follies of this life would soon be dropped,

And vice, in ev'ry shape, would soon be cropped.

Then man would happy be, and love his brother,

And peace would still abide with one another.

CL. *When GOD's JUDGMENTS on SINNERS are visibly executed, the ATHEISTS, if any there be, must tremble.*

CALLING the sacred name of God in question, on frivolous occasions, or what is worse, to vindicate our falsehoods, has been too frequently practised in all ages. What sufficient proofs remain, not only in the Scriptures, but in the records of more modern date, in our own nation, of the heinousness of those imprecations, that have so immediately brought down such tremendous punishments on offenders! Yet how many persevere still to invoke the Deity, for punishments, even in the height of their passion, and follies! Good God! what presumptuous rashness, or rather madness, are we prone to! Could but a prayer be so fervently sent up, in immediate dangers, what relief might not be expected. The affecting catastrophe of *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, in the Acts of the Apostles, is sufficient to deter us from trampling under our feet God's great prerogative.

But I shall repeat two more of a more modern date in our own kingdom. Three women, at Devizes market, in Wiltshire, bargained

bargained for a certain quantity of corn, and when the price was to be paid, one of them fraudulently secreted her quota; with which being charged by the other two, she protested, with the most solemn asseverations, that she had paid her money; and prayed, that if she did not speak the truth, *God would immediately strike her dead.* The words were scarce out of her mouth *when she dropped down dead*; and the money was found in her possession. A written memorial, of this extraordinary event, now stands fixed up at the market cross, where the affair happened.

The other was at *Chalford* in the county of *Gloucester*. One *Richard Parsons*, a young man, was playing at whist one evening, at the house of *John Young*, in the said village, along with the said *Young*, *Dowell*, and *Parslow*, for two shillings a game; and the said *Parsons*, having lost some money, most prophanely wished, *that his flesh might rot, and his eyes never shut*, if he did not win the next game. Immediately after the expression, the people that were with him, declared that the candle went out, which terrified them so much, that it put an end to their play. *Parsons* was presently taken ill, and on going to bed, observed

a black spot on his leg, which spreading wider and wider, he went the next day to a surgeon; but all human assistance was in vain; for he died the next day after that. *His flesh being quite rotten, nor could his eyes be shut,* notwithstanding all the efforts of his friends to close them.

If there are men, whose consciences cannot feel clearly the Deity within them, nor the glorious firmament above their heads convince them, of the veracity of a Godhead, they must certainly be wilfully stubborn; when miraculous events, that are so clearly demonstrated, will not reform them.

CII. *For as often as ye EAT this BREAD, and DRINK this CUP, ye do shew the LORD's DEATH till he come.*

THIS is one of the sacred duties St. Paul recommended to the *Corinthians*, in order to keep in remembrance the institution of the LORD'S SUPPER, ordained by CHRIST himself, the night before he suffered for the expiation of the sins of the whole world, which ought to be kept up by all Christians in a devout manner, till the SECOND coming.

The

The reason why the apostle strenuously requested the *Corinthians* to observe this sacred duty, with a decent decorum, was, on account of the irregularities committed by them, at the performance of it. The Christians in this age are not guilty of their follies ; but far too few are willing to partake of this heavenly institution ; perhaps not thinking themselves qualified to receive it worthily. I would candidly ask, whether going unprepared to the Lord's table, or unworthy refusing to partake of it, is the greater crime ? Sins of omission undoubtedly are as grievous as sins of commission, in the eyes of God ; as we have plainly shewn in the Marriage Supper. For those that made light of it, escaped no better than he that came without the wedding garment ; both were punished ; the former for disobedience, and the latter for disrespect.

Let us then come to the Lord's table (though unprepared) with a good intention, and firm resolution, to forsake our sins ; and should we relapse after receiving, let us not be deterred from coming again, but strive daily to curb our failings ; and no doubt, when we have done our duty, as well as we are able, that our good and gracious God will accept our services, though they be not performed

performed with that exactness we could have wished. For we cannot expect salvation, except we endeavour to obey the gospel precepts, to the utmost of our power.

CIII. *The PENITENTIAL PSALM.*

(Funeral Tune)

HAVE mercy, Lord, on me I pray;
Thy help to me now lend;
For I'm o'erpow'r'd both night and day;
Some comfort to me send.

Thou know'st my aking heart, O Lord,
How long I've been oppress'd;
'Tis only thou canst help afford:
And cause my grief to rest.

O, blessed Lord, in vain I've try'd
The art of human skill;
And now I know that none beside
Thee, can a cure fulfil.

How long, O God, dost thou detain
Thy wonted grace from me?
And I a spectacle remain,
Of grief and misery.

But

But why, O Lord, should I repine,
 Since 'tis thy wonted grace :
 And that it is thy bless'd design,
 My sins for to deface.

My sickness, Lord, has made me look
 Back, on my mispent years ;
 How I, when young thy law forsook ;
 But now repent with tears.

Yet let me beg, my blessed God,
 Since I do feel the smart
 Of thy severe afflicting rod,
 Some help to me impart.

And if it be thy blessed will,
 My health to me bestow ;
 Then thy commands I will fulfil,
 And still in goodness grow.

CIV. *The* THANKSGIVING PSALM.

(15th Psalm Tune)

MY soul, bless thou the Lord always ;
 His mercy does abound ;
 And to thy Maker give the praise ;
 'Tis he hath made thee sound.

From

From sickness now thou art set free ;
 Death's fiery dart he's stay'd :
 Thy praises, and thy thanks, then see
 To him be duly paid.

With my whole heart, I'll praise the Lord,
 And magnify him still :
 His glorious acts I will record,
 And his commands fulfil.

For since my God has heard my pray'r,
 And has remov'd my fear :
 Still then to him I do declare,
 My voice I'll always rear.

O bless the Lord, ye people all,
 His praises still proclaim ;
 For he will make the sinners fall,
 That call not on his name.

'Tis he that wond'rous things hath wrought,
 In former times, we're told :
 He always heard those men that sought
 His covenant of old.

For he will surely hear the cry
 Of those that seek his face :
 And straight to him he instantly
 Does send his saving grace.

Therefore

Therefore with me come praise the Lord,
 All ye that love his name ;
 And let us still, with one accord,
 Sing praises to the same.

CV. DOOMSDAY; *from* HERBERT.

“ **C**OME to Judgment, come away !”
 (Hark ! I hear the angel say,
 Summoning the dust to rise)
 Haste, resume, and lift your eyes ;
 Hear ! ye sons of Adam, hear !
 Man, before thy God appear !

Come to Judgment, come away !
 This the last, the dreadful day.
 Sovereign author, judge of all,
 Dust obeys thy quick'ning call,
 Dust no other voice will heed :
 Thine the trump that wakes the dead.

Come to Judgment, come away !
 Lingering man no longer stay :
 Thee let earth at length restore,
 Pris'ner in her womb no more,
 Burst the barriers of the tomb,
 Rise to meet thy instant doom.

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Come

Come to Judgment, come away!
 Wide dispers'd howe'er ye stray.
 Lost in fire, or air, or main,
 Kindred atoms meet again;
 Sepulcher'd where'er ye rest,
 Mix'd with fish, or bird, or beast.

Come to Judgment, come away!
 Help, O CHRIST! thy works decay;
 Man is out of order hurl'd,
 Parcell'd out to all the world;
 Lord, thy broken concert raise,
 And the music shall be praise.

A D D E N D A.

How must terrors then arise,
 In th' ungodly's tearful eyes!
 How with bliss will good men see
 Joys to all eternity!
 Dearest children, think on this;
 Forfeit not eternal bliss.

CVI. *The CHRISTIAN'S PRAYER.*

O, SAVIOUR of the world! Thou
 that art the brightness of thy father's
 glory, and the express image of his person;
 Thou that art the beginning and end of all
 things;

things ; who hast destroyed the power of the devil, and overcome death ; thou that fittest at the right hand of the father, that makest intercession for all the world ; thou that art the judge of the quick and dead ; thou that wilt speedily come down in thy father's glory, to reward all men according to their works ; be thou my light and peace ; be thou my guide and director in all things, that I may love and fear thee as I ought.—Cast out of my heart all evil thoughts and wicked designs, that I may be ready to forgive all my enemies, and do good to all people. Thou knowest, O Lord, my transgressions, and how I have sinned against thee continually.—Forgive me all those sins [*here mention the greatest offences*] that I too frequently and flagrantly committed in my youth. And, indeed, my life hath been little else than one continual course of impiety, unthankfulness, and of unworthy returns for all thy goodness and loving kindness to me. How desirable am I to repent and become a new creature ! but the allurements of the world, the flesh, and the devil, so strongly beset me, that without the assistance of thy holy spirit, I am not able to withstand those powerful enemies. Assist me, O blessed Jesus ! and let thy holy spirit

infuse good thoughts into my mind continually ; that I be not led away with the errors of the wicked, nor fall from my weak, though good intentions. Keep my mind in an even temper, that I may meet all the contingencies of life as I ought ; that I may not be puffed up with pride or ambition, in prosperity, nor dejected in adversity ; but learn to imprint in my mind, That in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. Let the engagements and amusements of life never prevent my due obedience to thee, nor forget my charity and benevolence to my fellow-creatures, according to my ability. Possess my soul with all Christian graces and virtues, that living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, I may hereafter dwell with thee in those mansions of bliss and glory, which thou hast prepared for all those that love thee.

Amen.

CVII. *Knowest thou the ORDINANCES of HEAVEN? Canst thou set the Dominion thereof? Canst thou bind the Influences of PLEIADES?*

FROM the most remote antiquity, not only pestilential diseases, but many others, have been ascribed to starry influences, to malign conjunctions, and radiations of the heavenly bodies; but all reasonings upon this conjecture were obscure and perplexed, till our great philosopher, Sir *Isaac Newton*, taught men to think justly, and talk intelligently about the motions and influences of those remote bodies; whereby it appears that they affect us no otherwise, than as they occasion the visitations of the seasons, and different constitutions of the air.

*Nature well known, no Prodigies remain.
Comets are regular, Eclipses plain.*

What lengths have Predictors, Astrologers, Fortune-tellers, Cunning men, Conjurers, Calculators of nativities, and Dreamers of dreams, carried their futile prognostications into the minds of credulous people,
purely

purely for lucrative views; which set of men, the last plague in London totally annihilated. Numbers fell in the heat of the calamity. Others ventured to stay on the prospect of getting great estates, whose gain was great for a time, through the madness and folly of the people; but many of them went to their long home, not able to tell their own fate, or calculate their own nativities; and none ever appeared, or were heard of after the calamity.

Astrology being reckoned a fallacious art, all the chimeras deduced there from, may be plainly confuted by physical reasons, and therefore are justly rejected by all sound philosophers. "For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor, how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out."

CVIII. *On the careless* INNATTENTION
of READING.

HOW many are there who spend their time in reading, as carelessly as if they were at their pastime or play; but how many may be found, who scarce ever open
a book

a book of any kind; and as many, whose only delight is in reading songs and ballads. The Bible and religious books are seldom perused, but when they are, it is with such indifference, as occasions no improvement: But plays, romances, novels, anonymous memoirs, voyages, travels, adventures, and such as tend to entertain the mind, without any great degree of attention, constitute the library of the greatest part of mankind; but should they choose to ornament their stock with a few religious books, the sacred volumes may lie undisturbed, till they are all covered with dust.

It must be allowed, that those who are advanced in years, have a right to amuse themselves with what may innocently alleviate their infirmities, in order to pass the heavy hours away, in as agreeable a manner as possible. But youth, at their leisure hours, (which ought to be encouraged by their parents or guardians) should lay in such a stock of wisdom and knowledge, as no where can be found, but in the sacred writings, or some worthy moralists, ancient or modern.

CIX. *On the CAUSES and FOLLY of*
DISSENTIONS.

THE foundation of all differences, not only in the state, in the county, but in parishes, arise from a bigotted pride, and an affected superiority, that one person claims over another, owing to his birth, fortune, or qualifications. When the public weal is to be considered, men ought to divest themselves of all prejudiced notions whatever, and then they would readily unite, not only in consulting, but pursuing every advantage for its benefit: for private welfare is not to be compared to the common weal. But, perhaps, the Esquire, the Justice of the peace, or man of fortune, wants to claim the total right of dictation or government; they indeed ought to be consulted with the first, on account of their dignity and fortune; for respect ought to be paid to our superiors. But where ambition and pride hath fixed their seats, from thence will come dissensions and differences, as they will be determined to thwart every good purpose their brethren may propose, who do not coincide with their opinions, though it be against their own interest.

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Let then all those, whom God hath blessed with riches and honour, consider well the trust that is due from them to their inferiors, and they will readily and chearfully unite in every public good; as well for the defence of the state, the encouragement of agriculture and commerce, as the discouragement of vice and wickedness, and the promotion of virtue and godliness.

CX. *The FOLLY and WICKEDNESS of rejecting MATRIMONY, on account of its expensive support; but, should it be embraced, of neglecting their FAMILIES and CHILDREN, for the Pleasure of Dissipation.*

THE extravagancy of dress, dissipation, and thinking after unlawful pleasures, are become so fashionable, that matrimony is rejected, except a large fortune can be procured, in order to support those luxurious careers; which, should that succeed, would be the only means of increasing them. It may be asserted, that this age is no worse than the last; 'tis true, different vices have varied at different periods. But the well
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thinking part of mankind must allow, that dissipated pleasure never so deeply affected the middle ranks, till the present age. It must naturally follow then, that when a partner is taken by the hand, family connections and expences are increased; assemblies, dinners, suppers, tea-drinking, and card-playing, engross so much time, that not only a trade, or calling is neglected, but a family also. The young couple then, after having spent the fortunes which their kind and affectionate parents bestowed on them; if they have not audacious boldness to become bankrupts, must wear out the rest of their days, in some disagreeable situation and calling, or die of disappointment and grief, in melancholy reflections on their unfortunate proceedings.

In order then to prevent such enormous follies, parents should not indulge their children in such extravagant principles, when it is not in their power to support them. My lord and my lady cannot cut a greater figure at St. *James's*, than a spirited lad or lass does at a fair, a play-house, or an assembly. Fur hats, broad clothes, silk gowns and stockings, are now made the dress, of not only the middling rank, but even of the inferior sort, who are able to purchase them; which,

which, about a century ago, was the dress only of kings and queens. What must ensue then, but poverty and distress, when sickness or old age approacheth. Let us strive to subdue our extravagancies and follies, and act as becometh our situations, then we shall have no objection to enter discreetly into matrimony, and be ready to support that station of life as ordained by God.

CXI. *That WOMEN adorn themselves in Modest APPAREL with SHAMEFACEDNESS and SOBRIETY, not with Broidered HAIR, or GOLD, or PEARLS, or costly ARRAY.*

PRIDE in dress of either sex, is very unbecoming, for it shews that a lofty and ambitious spirit remains in the heart of those that are possessed with it. When the fair sex are endowed with a beautiful complexion, pride in dress often accompanies it, in order to attract admiration, which frequently prevents the embellishment of the mind, on which all future happiness must depend; for, were our minds better cultivated in the principles of religion in youth,

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and

and pride discouraged, we should be more desirous of affecting the plain, but decent dress, of the people called Quakers. Perhaps some will assert, that it would be detrimental to trade, by no means: for, should those of ability chuse to renew their dresses as oft as they please, why not be made in a decent form? But it is natural for those, who are deeply tinctured with pride, to start objections, when their follies are exposed to ridicule.

I can give no better advice than the sacred volumes have done, for they say, *When pride cometh, then cometh shame, but with the lowly is wisdom. As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman without discretion. Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. A shamefaced and faithful woman is a double grace, and her continent mind cannot be valued.*

CXII. L Y I N G.

SINCERITY and plainness in speech, the old English mode of addressing one another, is become so out of fashion, that dissimulation and falsehood so prevalent in
our

our present conversation, has almost turned our language into a lie.

There is little difference between a liar and forswearer, for he that will tell a lie, may easily be entreated to forswear himself. The Egyptians made a law, that every liar should be put to death. And *Cyrus* told the king of Armenia, that a lie deserved no pardon. The Persians and Indians deprived their magistrates of all honour, and farther speech, that lied. What worthy examples have these Heathen nations left upon record? How great care and circumspection ought we, Christians, to be endowed with, when our adversary, the devil, is continually walking about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour? He is called a liar, and the father of it; for, by his lies *Eve* was seduced, and the Son of God tempted. How many good men, in all ages, have been condemned and punished falsely, for the lies and evil reports of others? *Joseph* was sent into a dungeon, and *Jesus Christ* arraigned at *Pilate's* tribunal by false accusations. What warnings have we from the sacred writings, to forbear the accursed practice? *Solomon* tells us that a lying tongue is an abomination to the Lord. The son of *Sirach* says, That a lie is a foul blot

blot in a man, yet it is continually in the mouth of the untaught, and that a thief is better than a liar. And our great Apostle charges us not to lie one to another.

Seeing then, that lying is so detestable a crime, it brings the possessor of it, in this life, under an everlasting jealousy and suspicion, so that he is not believed, even when he speaks the truth, but what is of greater consequence, the exclusion of Heaven, without repentance.

CXIII. *It is not the PLACE that maketh the PERSON, but the PERSON that maketh the PLACE honourable.*

BEFORE a man accept of any office or promotion, he ought to consider well the trust that is to be reposed in him; for, officers should rule by good laws, and good examples, judge by wisdom and justice, and defend by care and vigilance. How ready are some to receive places of honour, but how careless in executing their duty; how many also are there who accept of lucrative places, purely to be the tools of those that conferred them; and how many are brought
up

up to the priesthood, who neither preach, nor live on their cures. What negligence must this be in those who accept of promotions, purely for their emoluments, without any regard to execute the trust, that the dignity of their office requires. It would be beneficial for the community, if a justice of the peace was to be appointed in every parish, they would be able, not only to judge, but perhaps amicably settle the differences of their neighbours, which would be the best means of preventing numerous animosities, as well as frivolous law-suits. For the heart, understanding, council and essence in a common wealth, are the good laws and statutes therein established; and no nation enjoys them purer than Great Britain, were they properly put in execution; but laws not executed, are of no value, and as good not made, as not practised.

Would then the Rector, or Vicar but reside on his benefice, and was he appointed a justice of the peace, what satisfaction and happiness must accrue to his neighbours, if his trust was executed as became his dignity.

CXIV. PATIENCE.

PATIENCE and perseverance distinguish God's children from hypocrites and dissemblers; for patience is made more strong and perfect under afflictions. Ought not then that to be born with patience, which cannot be redressed with carefulness? How impatient are some husbandmen when harvest weather does not happen agreeable to their expectations. What discontent and murmuring, what diffidence in the Almighty, so as to break the Sabbath, by inning their corn on that day, when they are warranted from scripture, that seed time and harvest shall never fail. What distrust in providence is this? for despairing at his actions, is the only means of increasing our calamities: The best salve for disappointments, and misery, is patience. God doth not afflict us willingly, nor grieve the children of men, except our sins give him just cause, and necessitate him to punish.

Let us then take *Job* for a pattern in all our actions, and we shall find him patient under the most severe afflictions, such as never man experienced save himself; so content was he under them, and so submissive

five to the will of God, that in his greatest dilemmas, he blessed the name of the Lord. Let us submit to God's wisdom in respect of his disposal and ordering of things; for as he calls us his children, why not leave every thing to his discretion. Should not we think that parent heedless, who indulged his child in every foolish step it would naturally take? Would it not bring itself to its grave a thousand ways before it's time, if not prevented by a diligent parent? Why then not joyfully submit to the unerring wisdom of our heavenly Father, though he does sometimes disappoint us in our aims and wishes, because he knows it is for our good?

CXV. *INGRATITUDE.*

INGRATITUDE was the cause of the sin and death of man, therefore it behoveth us all carefully to resist this shameful vice, as no man's life is void of it. The laws of Athens, Persia and Macedonia, condemned the unthankful person to death; and the Egyptians, of all vices, abhorred it. It is better never to receive a benefit, than to be

unthankful for it. Nothing waxeth sooner old, than a good turn, or benefit. That person had better be born foolish, than understand how to be unthankful, for impudency is the companion of that monster ingratitude. How frequently do we find men not only neglect to repay kindnesses, but return injuries instead of them? Nay, even if you should admonish your friend of a fault, or tell him of an error, he presently looks on you as his enemy. This was the case of the Jewish Nation with the blessed JESUS, and St. Paul tells the Galatians, that he is become their enemy, because he tells them the truth.

As the most barbarous nations on earth, do good to those that do good them; what must unthankful Christians then think of themselves, who are commanded to do good for evil. Let us be grateful to our benefactors, and delight in returning a benefit received. But should we not be able to retaliate it, let us not forget it as long as we live; and let us look upon our friend who admonisheth us, with the greatest esteem and respect. For he that hateth reproof is brutish, and he that being often reprov'd, and hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

CXVI. *Duty of* MASTERS *and*
SERVANTS.

AS the duty of masters and servants is reciprocal, it behoveth them both to fill their stations with honour. Masters ought to be just in performing those conditions on which their servants were hired, and not too rigid in their commands, if they expect from them fidelity and obedience. Masters are also bound, not only to shew a good example, but to instruct them in their duty, as well as gently to admonish and reprove when required. Public prayers ought to be regularly performed by every master of a family, at which, both children and servants are to attend; for, how should we expect a blessing on our endeavours, if we are so remiss in putting up our petitions to the Almighty giver of all good things. For the prayer of the humble pierceth the clouds, and will not turn away till the Highest regard it. This duty may be thought ridiculous to some, and unpleasant to others, that have not been accustomed to it: but that will be no excuse at a future day of reckoning. As soon then, as we see into our errors, that moment we should

strive diligently to correct them. Servants must be obedient to their masters, whether they be courteous or froward, and ought to bear, with patience, their correction, by not answering again. They must be willing to learn whatever is necessary, and be faithful in their duty; not with eye-service, but singleness of heart: for the servant that dutifully honoureth his master, shall, in time to come, find love and obedience in his own household. For, it is a sure maxim, that they are able to be the best masters, who have been the most obedient servants.

Let him that commandeth, as well as him that serveth, be honestly minded, then they may rest assured, that they will be rewarded by their heavenly master.

CXVII. *Keep thy HEART with all Diligence, for out of it are the Issues of LIFE.*

THESE are the instructions of king Solomon to his son: A precept worthy of the greatest notice, which, if strictly adhered to, would entirely banish all wicked thoughts out of our hearts; for, by indulging them, the grand deceiver of mankind will

will soon prompt them into action. This is the peculiar property of God's law which reacheth to the heart, whereas man's can only extend to words and actions; for, it is he only that is the searcher of hearts: Therefore, be we never so innocent in our tongue and hands, if this purity of heart is wanting, we shall not be acquitted before him.

Jesus Christ, in his sermon on the mount, renews this precept, by telling us, "That blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Our great Apostle, also bids us abstain from all appearance of evil, and strictly charges us, that no corrupt communications proceed out of our mouths; such as bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour, evil-speaking, and malice, productions that must be bred in the heart, before they can be expressed with the tongue.

Let, my children, this weighty precept sink deep into our minds, for we are forbidden to hate, as well as to hurt; and although we may not speak evil of our neighbour, we are as strictly commanded to wish him no evil: And we are also commanded not to conceive any lust in our hearts, as strictly as not to commit adultery. We must neither envy our neighbour's prosperity,

prosperity, nor rejoice in his adversity, nor wish to enjoy any part of his property unlawfully; by thus keeping our heart with strict care and diligence, it will be so pure that we shall see God, by the merits of his blessed Son.

CXVIII. *If a Man love ME, he will keep my WORD, and my FATHER will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him.*

THESE are the comfortable words that the blessed Jesus recommended to his disciples, the evening before he was going to suffer; yea, his whole discourse centered in requesting them to keep his commandments, and love one another, with this assured promise, That his Father and him, would come unto them, and make their abode with them. What proofs of this have all good men experienced since the creation of the world, even to the present times? Was not *Noah* saved from the general deluge, purely because he put his trust in God? Did not God protect *Job*, till he suffered Satan to try his patience, but
without

without effect, because he still kept his integrity? Was not *Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego*, delivered from the burning fiery furnace, and *Daniel* from the den of lions, because they put their trust in him? What encouragement doth our great Apostle give to those that keep God's commandments? Who is he that will harm you, says he, if ye be followers of that which is good? Yet it pleased the Supreme Being that numbers suffered martyrdom, for the sake of Christianity; which sufferings give it a greater sanction than all other professed religions whatever; and no doubt but that God would send his holy spirit to strengthen, and enable them to bear up with chearfulness.

Let us then love the Lord our God, with all our heart, mind, and strength, and our neighbour as ourselves; then he will be with us in all dangers, and will relieve us, if it seemeth meet to his godly wisdom; if not, we must be content to suffer patiently, as it will add unto us a far greater weight of glory.

CXIX. *He that accuseth another, must take care not to be guilty of the same Fault himself.*

OUR own culpability and compassion, are often a means of suffering the guilty to escape unpunished. It was the only cause of rescuing the Jewish woman taken in the very act of adultery, who was brought before Jesus Christ, in order to have his sentiments on that atrocious offence; and his merciful principles knowing by what means she would be released, ordered him that was without sin to cast the first stone at her. For, by the law of *Moses*, adulterers were to be stoned to death; on which account, she was left unpunished; because, on a slight reflection, they all found themselves guilty of some crime or other. This woman's pardon doth not lessen the punishment of this heinous offence: *For whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.* Neither ought it to prevent magistrates putting in execution the laws of the land: For the stricter the laws of God and man are put in execution, the more religious and prosperous will any state be. On inspecting the downfall of the greatest empires, we find a dilatoriness, of not
only

only executing justice, but punishing vice. How severely did the blessed Jesus rebuke the Jewish rulers, for their great neglect of those duties.

As magistrates ought to be men of fortune and good principles, so they would then not be intimidated in punishing offenders as the laws direct; for, they would seriously consider so to temper justice and mercy, as would best suit the public weal.

CXX. *Every Man ought to be more careful to live well, than desirous to live long.*

MAN is compared to a thing of nought, as his time passeth away like a shadow. What then is life, that we should desire it? Or, what part of it is it, that we should wish to remain with us? It is evident from the fleetingness of pleasure, that no man would wish to lead his life over again. Why, then are we so anxious in making such provisions for this life, and so negligent for the next, which will never have an end? Or, why should we wish to have our days lengthened, when we make such a bad use of the present time? Let us seriously
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reflect then, on all our thoughtless hours; and consider how few we have truly numbered. Why should we want more years, to commit more follies?

Let this life be considered, only as it may conduce to the happiness of the next. And as no man can attain perfection, let us request of God to teach us, so to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom; then we shall, not only, be desirous of correcting our errors, but leading the remaining part of life to God's praise and glory, and will be ready chearfully to sacrifice the transient pleasures of a few years, to the never-fading joys of eternity.

CXXI. *The INNOCENT MAN smileth before the JUDGE, but the TRAITOR is discovered before he is suspected.*

THERE is no greater damnation than the doom of a man's conscience; for though some people's conscience may seem to be seared with an hot iron, yet at the point of death it is awakened, and driveth the miserable soul to desperation. But frequently a conscience loaden with the burden
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of any glaring guilt, is its own judge, and its own accuser. There can be no greater good than innocency; nor no worse evil than a guilty conscience. How composed were the blessed apostles and martyrs, before the greatest potentates, and the most awful tribunals? It was their innocency that protected them, because it was built on divine reason; for, their Lord and Master commanded them, not to be afraid of him who had power to kill the body; but of HIM who had power to cast both body and soul into hell. What comfortable words are these, and such as these that supported all the prophets, to rebuke, even kings, when they had done amiss: What effects have they had, and will have to the end of the world?

Let then, innocency be our guard, and it will protect us in all dangers, for it cannot be taken away by torment; it is the most profitable thing in the world, because it maketh all other things profitable; for what signifies the riches and grandeur of this world, if innocency and contentment is wanting; for the fear of death never troubleth the mind of an innocent man.

CXXII. *He that loveth the WORLD bath incessant TRAVAIL ; but he that hateth it bath rest.*

HE that fixeth his mind wholly on this world, loseth his soul ; but he that desireth its safety, little or nothing regardeth it. The delights of this world are so transient, that they are compared to bubbles in the water, which are soon raised, and suddenly laid. The world, the flesh, and the devil, are our three greatest enemies ; therefore, it behoveth us to guard ourselves against them, for except we will mortify our natural passions, we shall surely be overcome by them. How often did the blessed Son of God, warn his hearers not to set their affections on the things of this world, by telling them, That where their treasure is, there will their hearts be also. How was the rich man in the gospel mortified, when Jesus Christ bid him go and sell all that he had, and give to the poor, and come and follow him ? It was because he had great possessions ; which occasioned the blessed Jesus farther to say, That it was as possible for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, as for a rich man, (who was glued
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to his riches) to enter into the kingdom of Heaven.

It is evident then, what influence riches have upon piety, in two respects, laying aside the many frauds, or tricks, that perhaps have been pursued in obtaining them. *First*, They occasion an endless variety of cares and anxieties, which draw the affections away from God: And *Secondly*, They are offensive to piety in the possession; because, if they are hoarded, they never fail to beget covetousness, which is the root of all evil; and, if they are enjoyed, they become strong temptations to luxury, drunkenness, lust, pride and idleness. Nevertheless, riches may be good, when he that possesseth them, knoweth how to use them. For as poverty is not meritorious, if it is not borne with patience; so riches are not hurtful, unless they be abused.

CXXIII. *The GIFTS of FORTUNE are transitory, and tied to no Time, but the GIFTS of NATURE are permanent, and endure always.*

HE that will live happily, must neither trust to good fortune, nor submit to bad; he must be prepared against all assaults. It is not our own which fortune hath given us, for we know not how soon she may take it away. It frequently happens when fortune has bestowed large favours suddenly, the occupiers become so imprudent and ungovernable in their passions, that they vanish as suddenly from them. Nay, indeed, no man is so perfectly grounded in any degree of estate, but that he may be subject to chance and alteration of life. But the gifts of nature remain with us; which, if we suffer to be our guide, we shall never go astray; for, she friendly sheweth us what is good, what she seeketh and desireth; but vain man stoppeth his ears, and will not hear what she counselleth. It is our duty then, not to reject her advice, but observe it. Let us not suffer her to lie idle through sloth, nor overwhelm her with intemperance, or brutish pleasures. We must exert her, not
only

only in God's praise and glory, but in being beneficial to our fellow-creatures, to the utmost of our power.

It becometh us then, early to fortify our minds with courage and patience, that we may support, with a becoming resolution, the allotted portion of human evils; for a noble spirit disdaineth the malice of fortune; his greatness of soul is not to be cast down, as he strives, with all his might, to keep his conscience void of offence towards God, and towards men.

CXXIV. *O! that Men would praise the LORD for his GOODNESS: and declare the WONDERS that he doeth for the CHILDREN of MEN.*

THE Heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work. The earth is full of his goodness, so is the great and wide sea also, wherein are things moving innumerable, both small and great beasts; But how wonderfully hath he made man, the pride of his creation, and hath given him superiority and command over all; he hath endowed him with reason, that

that he might not only contemplate his own frame, but adore, with reverence, his great and beneficent Creator. He hath made us free agents, and hath left good and evil to our choice, but not without subjoining rewards and punishments; therefore, if we will not keep his commandments, we must expect to suffer for our transgressions; for his eye pierceth the secrets of our heart, and he is no respecter of persons.

Let us then set forth the glory of our Creator, not only in speaking, but doing those things that are agreeable unto him; and let us improve the talents committed to our charge; let us frequently put up our petitions to him, and thank him for our creation, as well as preservation; but above all, for his inestimable benefit in sending his Son, not only to be the propitiation for our sins, but for giving us a most excellent code of rules, for our easier and better attainment of everlasting felicity. Let us then, with unanimity praise the Lord for his goodness, and declare the wonders that he hath done for the children of men; nay, let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord, for his name is excellent, and his praise above Heaven and earth. *Amen, and amen.*

CXXV. *Godliness hath not only the Promise of this Life, but of that which is to come.*

WHEN the Israelites were going to possess the good land that God had reserved for them, he commanded *Moses* strictly to charge them not to deviate from the precepts that he had given them; with this farther observation; that if they would diligently hearken unto his words, and love the Lord their God with all their heart, and with all their soul, he would send them rain in due season; that they might gather the fruits of the earth in perfection; that they might eat, and be full, and bless the Lord their God. From which time the Jews made it a general rule, to bless God at their meals. And good people, to this day, forget not to perform that pious practice of antiquity handed down to them. Moreover, *Moses* was farther commanded to tell them, that if they would but walk in the ways which the Lord their God required, they should enjoy those blessings; that it should go well with them, and that he would prolong their days in the land which they were going to possess. The royal psalmist also

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observes,

observes, that he never saw the Righteous forsaken, nor their seed begging bread. And the grand rules of Christianity farther inform us, that Godliness hath both the promise of this life, and of that which is to come.

Let us, my Children, love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our might; let us keep his commandments; and do you diligently teach the same to your children. Then it will go well with you, and God will prolong your days here, and give you eternal bliss hereafter.

CXXVI. *My SON, hear the Instruction of thy FATHER, and forsake not the LAW of thy MOTHER; for they shall be an ORNAMENT of GRACE to thy HEAD, and CHAINS about thy NECK. If SINNERS entice thee, consent thou not.*

THESE are the instructions of king Solomon to his son, delivered in these and the following verses; which merit the utmost attention. They teach us to resist the
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first approaches to temptation, the only sure method of being conquerors : For, if we listen to the first attack, tho' only with an intention of yielding to a particular sin, which at first sight appears to be of little consequence, we are in the greatest danger of being undone. One sin paves the way to another, and when once we have begun, we shall not be able to know where we shall end. Which occasioned the royal Preacher so often to reiterate this advice, knowing how readily simple youths are to be led astray.

Hear then the Instructions of your Father, O my children ! For they are intended for your good ; give ear to his admonitions, for they proceed from unfeigned love. Have not your parents watched for your welfare, and toiled for your ease ? Do honour therefore to their age, and let not their grey hairs be treated with irreverence ; then your footsteps shall not stumble ; for God hath promised to prolong the days of obedient children. For he that in youth, guideth his life by reason, shall in age find the ready footpath from ruin. But should you embrace the habit of vice and wickedness in youth ; you will have no regard for virtue in old age. All my instructions are short

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and easy, therefore ye may sooner read and the better retain them. Let them then, I repeat it again, be regarded; and your own children in reverence for your example, will repay your piety with filial love. But if you disregard them, remember, that the eye of Omnipotence beholds all your actions, weighs them in the balance of justice, and will exactly punish or reward according to your works.

CXXVII. *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous therefore and repent.*

THESE are the expressions of the Son of God, after he was entered into his glory, spoken to his beloved Apostle St. John, while under his banishment in the Island of Patmos, which he was ordered to send to the Church at Laodicea. In the preceeding verses the Laodiceans are rebuked for their luke-warmness in the religion lately delivered to them; because they trusted too much to their riches, which they esteemed their chief good, as if they wanted nothing else. For which they were condemned, and counselled to buy without

without money, the inestimable treasures contained in the gospel of JESUS CHRIST; which would not only convince them of their follies, but assist them in shaking off that dull lethargic temper, which had so long given the Son of God cause of complaint. And for their farther encouragement, he tells them, that he stands knocking at their doors, waiting for admittance into their hearts; and if any of them might hear his voice with a due regard, and open the door to their affectionate SAVIOUR, how mean soever their circumstances should be in life, and how faulty soever their characters; he would enter into their house, and would treat them with the most endearing friendship; accept the tokens of their affection, and give them the most solid evidences of his own.

Let then all of us that have embraced Christianity, hear this grand matter of general instruction, and consider whether we deserve not the same chastisement with the Laodiceans: Let us lay aside our lukewarmness, and not trust too much to earthly grandeur; for the time is not far off when the last seal shall be set upon the characters of men; and no more opportunities will ever be granted, for reforming what has been done.

done amiss, and recovering the unrighteous and polluted soul to rectitude and purity. Therefore, let us be zealous in obeying the rules of his holy Gospel, while it is called to day; for the hour will suddenly come, when we shall be totally incapacitated.

CXXVIII. *Let us now fear the LORD our GOD, who giveth RAIN; both the FORMER and the LATTER RAIN, in his Season: He reserveth unto us the appointed Weeks of HARVEST.*

HOW thankful ought we to be, for God's great goodness towards us, who giveth us rain in its proper season. The former rain after seed-time, to make it take root; the latter rain before harvest, to plump and fill the ears. Is not this sufficient to let us see clearly the providential care of God, as his eyes are over all his works? But let us consider how often these blessings have been withholden from nations who have been disobedient to his commands; how frequently does the prophets exclaim against the Israelites for their rebellious principles; nay, he tells them, That
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for their disobedience, the Lord will turn their plenty into scarcity, and their joy into mourning. For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof, the world, and they who dwell therein.

Let these weighty expressions, spoken by the prophets to the Jewish people, sink deep into our minds; for the Lord will punish all disobedient nations, as it seemeth meet to him. He can send upon us cursing, vexation, and rebuke in all we set our hands unto. He can smite us with consumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and extreme burning; with the burning ague, and with the sword: For the Lord is God. He kills and he makes alive, he wounds and he heals: neither is there any that can deliver out of his hands: He can send his rain upon one city, and not upon another: He can smite us with blasting and with mildew; nay, though he give us a plentiful crop, he can destroy it, even in harvest, by unseasonable weather. O that we were wise! that we would duly weigh and consider the dealings of God towards us, that we might happily prevent those evils, and that we would consider our latter end. For the harvest is an emblem of the end of the world. The wheat shall be gathered into
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God's barn; but the tares shall be burned in the fire: So shall it be in the end of the world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom, all things that offend, and them who do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their father. *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.*

CXXIX. *If ye love ME, keep my COMMANDMENTS; for when ye shall have done all that is commanded, say, We are unprofitable SERVANTS, for we have only done that which was our DUTY.*

LET, my children, these words of the blessed Son of God, sink deep into our hearts. In this happy constitution of ours, we have liberty to serve God as we please, the Bible may be in every body's house, and the word of God is preached in all congregations. If we will be careless servants, and disregard the gospel precepts, and will not, at all times, be ready to open the

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the door to our affectionate master, at whatever watch of the night he knocketh, we shall be condemned as such, and undoubtedly must be beaten with many stripes; because we knew his will, but neglected to do it. He farther informs us, that the servant which knew not his Lord's will, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes: For, unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required. Let us then take particular care, how we lead our lives. Let us diligently observe our Saviour's commands; and, let us not forget to attend both public and private prayers with the utmost devotion. For prayer is the key of Heaven; it is that by which we can pour out all our wants to God, as to a most loving father, with a confidence that he will supply them, as seemeth meet to his divine wisdom: For, the scripture informs us, That where two or three are gathered together in his name, there will he be in the midst of them; and that the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man, availeth much. What examples of godliness have many Heathens shewn us, who had not the knowledge of the scriptures. One of them cries out to his friends, when he had spent a day without doing good;

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O, woe is me, I have lost a day! And another says, *That he was not worthy the name of a man, when he had spent a whole day in worldly pleasures.* Now, how many days, nay, even months, and years do some Christians spend in worldly pleasures. I wish it be not more tolerable for *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah* at the day of judgment, than for them.

Let me request you to attend the public worship of God every Sabbath day, with the utmost reverence and devotion, as commanded by the canons and rubrics of the church. There you are taught when to kneel, when to stand up, when, and what to answer, that you may not be guilty of any disorder, or indecency; but may worship God with your body, as well as with your spirit, which are his. And take care, that you be in the church before service begins; for, how can ye confess your manifold sins and wickedness to God; or render thanks for the great benefits received at his hands, when you are not present to hear that pious exhortation, nor to join in the general confession? The ancient apostolical constitutions, ordered a deacon to observe that the people should not whisper, nod, laugh, or doze in time of divine service, because every one in the congregation ought to behave himself

himself with attention and watchfulness, and lend a diligent ear to the word of God. Consider that ye are in God's house, and addressing yourselves to the Supreme Governor of Heaven and earth. Were ye to present a petition to your prince for some civil advantage relating to your temporal inheritance, or to sue out a pardon for some capital crime against his majesty; would ye do it with an unconcerned negligence? Or rather, would ye not approach him with awe and humility? How much more then, when ye are addressing the King of kings for spiritual blessings, and putting up a petition to the God of your life? God wants no vain oblations, nor sham pretensions offered to him; if you then think it fit and reasonable to kneel before your prince for temporal life, is it not highly necessary to kneel before the Lord your God for the welfare of your bodies, and the salvation of your souls?

Let me also request, that family prayers be performed every morning and evening, with the same sacred devotion; for, if ye are dilatory in the performance of those duties, how can ye expect, but to be beaten with many stripes, at the final day of retribution, when ye do not think it necessary to seek God while he may be found, nor to

call upon him when he is near: *For now is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation.* Remember then, that the short time we enjoy in this world, is all we have given us, in which, to provide for eternity. Therefore, let me seriously entreat you, not to throw it away carelessly, as if ye had no God to serve, nor soul to save. Take care, lest it be said of you, as it was of *Jezabel*; "I gave her space to repent, but she repented not." Be ye therefore ready, for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not. Let then every day be spent, as if it were your last, for the best of men must say, that they are unprofitable servants; for no man hath done his duty as he ought.

CXXX. *The contempt of Pleasure, is a certain Preparatory for the contempt of Pain.*

AS pleasure and pain constantly succeed each other, to the natural knowledge and experience of all degrees or stations of life, it becomes us then, never to be too much elated with the one, nor dejected with the other. If pleasure be our chief delight, we shall not be prepared to endure pain when

when it approacheth. The patient man does not only bear up under his own sorrows and afflictions, but will chearfully and readily comfort and assist his fellow-creatures under theirs. He compareth pleasure to a dream, as it vanisheth like a shadow. He has rightly, and justly proportioned the one with the other; for, he says, Why should we not submit with a becoming resignation to our condition, as we cannot expect an exemption from what we were born unto.

Let us then take the patient man's advice, and not addict ourselves to the pleasures of this world, any farther than to create chearful and innocent amusements; then we shall be prepared to meet anxiety and pain with a true Christian fortitude, and shall readily conclude with our great apostle, that we know how to be full, and to be hungry, both to abound, and to suffer need; for we can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth us. Then we shall know that our contempt of pleasure, hath thoroughly prepared us for the contempt of pain. For all the maxims, and lessons of instruction, left upon record by Heathen authors, (tho' many of them noble) are not to be compared to the rules of Christianity.

CXXXI. *On the Cause of the Fear of DEATH,
and its Remedy.*

AS there is nothing more certain than death, nor any thing more uncertain than the time, or manner of its approach; we ought to lead such a life, as would make our Deliverer welcome at any period. For no man dieth more willingly, than he that hath lived most honestly. The natural principle of self-preservation, begets in all men, a natural fear of death; but this is greatly encreased by an over-fondness for the delights of this world; and still farther encreased by a sense of guilt, and fear of punishment in the next. It is this principle that makes us subservient to the laws of man, as well as the laws of God: And, if we would but judge properly of the period, and uses of human life, the observance thereof, would cure our vicious passions, so that we should neither dread death, nor desire life. It is the stratagems of our great deceiver, and our own corrupted natures, that prevent us from thinking of death, or making any provision for it, because we are so attached to the pleasures of this world, from which we are loth to depart.

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Let us then observe, that the longest life is not the happiest, except it is spent in doing good; he that would wish to die godly, must let his vices die before him; for what certainty may be expected from a death-bed repentance, when perhaps we may be cut off in a moment, even before we have had time to put up any petition to God. How frequent are sudden deaths? Let us then not yield our members, servants to uncleanness, and iniquity unto iniquity; but let us yield our members, servants to righteousness, unto holiness; that being made free from sin, and becoming the servants of God, we may have our fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

CXXXII. *When we go to Bed, our Minds ought to be entirely free from Passion, and our Bodies clear of the least Intemperance.*

AS no day ought to be spent without some remembrance how we have bestowed our time, so we ought never to compose ourselves to rest, till we have acknowledged to God, the mis-spent hours of the day; for no day cometh to man, wherein
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he hath not some cause of sorrow. Moreover, how disturbed must be the sleep of a contentious mind? Or, how dare we go to rest with any diabolical principles in our hearts, when we are uncertain but our beds may be our graves? For, how can we face our God with malice in our hearts, or in any sin unrepented of? In our self-examinations, we ought seriously to consider, how to make the most of human life, and what steps to pursue for the attainment of everlasting felicity: These considerations would so check our follies, that they would make us more careful of treading in the paths of virtue; and as careful to ask pardon of God, when we deviated from them. This grand rule of self-examination, every evening before we go to sleep, would so compose our minds, that no restless imaginations would disturb our night's repose; for, he that perplexes himself with any unrestrained passions in the course of the day, will be equally as much perplexed by the visions of the night: For our minds will be constantly employed in either doing good or evil.

Let us, Christians, not be ashamed to observe the rule that a Heathen philosopher taught his scholars, which was to sum up, every evening, the actions of the day; and
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if the good actions over-balanced the bad, to rejoice and improve them; but, if the bad over-balanced the good, to be sorry and amend them: For, if we do not govern our passions, we may be sure our passions will govern us.

CXXXIII. *A great FAULT in talking of APPARITIONS or GHOSTS before CHILDREN.*

FAIRY Tales, and Apparitions, are not only made a practice in conversation, to the great terror of youth, but too much believed by the credulous and unthinking part of mankind. These ghostly apprehensions are never seen but in the night, because our sight, as well as fears, are too weak to discern the fallacy. Would every person be bold enough, carefully to examine the cause of his fear, he would soon find it proceed from nothing but an imaginary spectacle. Moreover, does not the same God govern the night as well as the day; and who is he that will harm us, if we be followers of that which is good. Yet, I do not take upon me to define in what manner

the Supreme Being hath, or may reveal his will to mortals. But, in order to remove our fears a little on such weak and timid passions, I shall beg leave to lay before my readers, an instance, where a terrible Dæmon, or night-disturber, was apprehended. In a village nigh Penrith, the inhabitants of a certain house, were terrified almost to death, by an apparition appearing in the dead of the night, with such hideous howls, and rattling of chains, that they were determined to leave the house. But, by a certain person making application, that he would conjure the dæmon, and deliver them from their fears, for a certain sum of money, the cheat was discovered. The story was told to a friend, and he knowing the character of the conjurer, soon removed their fears himself without any fee. Accordingly, their friend, the honest conjuror, attends the night following, with a stout mastiff dog, and a gun, when, about the middle of the night, the terrible apparition appears; but the real conjuror being a man of spirit, opened the doors, and let loose his mastiff dog, which would have devoured the Dæmon, (who proved to be the false conjuror) in spite of all his rattling chains, and howlings, and sent him to his
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infernal abode, if he had not been rescued by the honest conjuror, without any spells, invocations, or farther punishment, than bidding him go home and dress his wounds received in the dæmonical conflict, and repent of his follies.

Let us pull the old woman out of our hearts, and let those notions imbibed in youth, or in the dead of the night, when our fears will not suffer us to clear up the point, be banished totally out of the breast of every well thinking person; for, on real discovery, they prove only to be the weak ideas of an effeminate and timorous mind.

CXXXIV. *Family UNHAPPINESS prevented,*
and Domestic HAPPINESS recommended.

THE many disagreements in families, are often owing to the dissipated pleasures pursued in youth; or by matches made up, purely for lucrative views. When matrimony is taken in hand, each party should seriously resolve, not to pursue any extravagancy in dress, diet, or recreations, beyond their abilities; but should consider, that their sole happiness must consist in their unanimity and tender affection for each other;

they must also be equally desirous to pursue the delightful sweets of domestic happiness ; else, how can they have the proper inspection, or correction of their children ; for, who can they intrust to do that duty for them, or how will they be accountable to God for their neglect of that duty. Whenever discontent arises at home, gadding abroad is not the method to cure it. Our natural ill temper, stupidity, acquired ill habits, and our neglect of the common rules of discretion must be curbed, before domestic happiness can be restored.

Let us then suffer discretion, virtue and good nature, accompanied with an evenness of temper, to be our steady companions ; then they will so settle our minds, and subdue our passions, that we shall not be discomposed, neither by a vixen nor a termagant. *Socrates*, and *Marcus Aurelius*, for all their acquired philosophy, were both unfortunately matched to as great shrews as possible ; yet none were deemed better husbands. Would the married couple but read over the rules for husbands and wives, laid down by our great apostle, to the Ephesians, they would be informed of their duty, in a clearer light than ever any Heathen philosopher had the happiness of knowing.

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Yet, we cannot but extol those great and good men, who had such command of their passions in such unenlightened ages.

CXXXV. CLEANLINESS, *a great*
BLESSING.

CLEANLINESS in all our actions is an excellent preservative of health, for cutaneous disorders, chiefly arise from want of it. Putrid and malignant fevers, are most frequent in narrow and dirty streets, and by wearing dirty clothes and linen. Magistrates in great towns, ought to be active in seeing that all nuisances be removed, both for health's sake, and decency. How commendable is it to see clean streets, as well as clean houses; and, how hard is it to see cleanly people affected by the nastiness of their neighbours. In all hot countries, the warmth of the climate occasions cleanliness to be strictly regarded; as perspiration renders frequent change of apparel necessary. How came it, that not only the Jews, but the Mahometans at présent, make cleanliness a part of their religion? The former were commanded by God, but the latter are not restrained on that account, save that they

they find it so beneficial for their health ; as there is scarce a garden belonging to any man of decency, which hath not a bathing place in it. Moreover, cleanliness is a steadier preserver of love, than beauty ; as the latter leaveth us when age approacheth, but the former will accompany us to our graves ; the one promotes it, the other preserves it ; for beauty is such a fading good, that it can scarce be possessed before it is vanished.

Cleanliness then, being so beneficial to the health of the body, it must be as beneficial to the health of the mind ; for their affinitive connection requires such a regularity of actions, that the one cannot be happy without the other.

CXXXVI. *If we pitch upon that Course of LIFE that is excellent, Custom will render it the most delightful.*

THE royal Preacher requests all parents to bring up their children in the paths of godliness in youth, then when they are old they will not depart from it. No doubt, but a great many parents think that they do

do their duty, according to the best of their knowledge and abilities; yet, when done, the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, are such powerful advocates of delight and pleasure to our sensual intellects, that we are frequently ensnared by them. So soon then, as our minds are capable of those enjoyments, we ought carefully to notice what passion we are most prone to, and strive (if it tend in any shape to our hurt) to guard more strongly against it; for if we suffer it to steal, never so slowly, or imperceptibly upon us, it will by repetition, increase and be made habitual: Then custom will become a second nature, and it will hardly be possible to eradicate it. How clearly is it seen, even in simple amusements; for you might sooner take the peasant's breakfast from him, than deprive him of his quid, or pipe of tobacco.

As all reasonable amusements may be enjoyed; let them be embraced on no other terms, than the laws of God require, or our abilities will afford; then, our using the good things of this life, in such a manner as we do not abuse ourselves thereby, will create in our minds such a serenity of temper, as may be said to enjoy happiness here. For, how can we expect to enjoy a blissful state
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in the next world, when we have not the least inclination to do the will of God in this.

CXXXVII. *On the Folly of treating ill, those CREATURES that GOD hath made so beneficial to us.*

THE horse, is not only the most noble, but the most useful animal in the whole creation, yet no creature is used so ill. Proud man is not content with his beautiful frame, pronounced by his Creator to be good; but must amend his imperfections, by sometimes cropping his ears, and frequently his tail; and when he hath done all our drudgery and slavery, by which we have shortened his days, his carcase must not be buried, but suffered to rot above ground, though he be never so offensive to the neighbourhood. What can we call it, but a cruelty of temper? That occasions so many cock-fights, and bull-beats; strange to tell! that more innocent pleasures cannot be adopted: A Mahometan would shudder at such fights: May it not be conjectured, that such people would as quickly run to see a duel fought with sword and pistol. Would
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our nobility (who ought to encourage activity in the British youth) take but as much delight in seeing a foot race, or a leaping match, as they do in a boxing match, it would be a means of bringing the Isthmian games into practice, allowed to be noble diversions amongst the ancient Greeks. Instead of such feats of activity, we are generally captivated with some frivolous amusements; readier to lay out a few shillings, on the sight of a puppet show, or a few Ledgerdeman tricks performed, than we would be in parting with half the sum for a good book or two, an object of charity, or in promoting some more commendable recreation.

Let us not then tyrannize over any part of the creation, for we must be accountable for the ill use of our dominion thereof; but consider, that even a sparrow, (so insignificant a bird as we may think it) does not fall to the ground, but by the permission of God; for the righteous man regardeth the life of his beast; but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.

CXXXVIII. FEAR GOD, *and keep his*
 COMMANDMENTS: *For this is the whole*
 DUTY of MAN. *For GOD shall bring*
every WORK into JUDGMENT, with every
secret Thing, whether it be Good, or whe-
ther it be Evil.

THESE are the expressions of the royal Preacher, after he had experienced all the pleasures and follies of this life. He found that there is no real satisfaction here, where all things, are not only attended with care and trouble, but uncertain and perishing also: He therefore concludes his discourse, by telling us, that all is vanity and vexation of spirit; and recommends us to fear God, and keep his commandments; for that is the only solid happiness of man. And, in order to make the impression deeper on our minds, he informs us, that the great Judge of the universe, will one day call us to account for whatever we shall do, during our residence in this vale of misery; and pass an impartial sentence, on both our secret and open actions: for nothing can hide our works from his All-seeing eye, nor shall any, not even the most minute, be forgotten. But with this remarkable difference,

rence, that the godly shall be rewarded with eternal happiness, and the wicked with everlasting misery.

Let us then, in order to attain true and lasting happiness, put our whole trust in God, obey all his precepts, and never suffer our feet to wander from the paths of virtue and religion; then we shall not only defy the malicious attempts of wicked men, assisted by all the powers of darkness; but we shall be ready to welcome the king of terrors whenever he approacheth our habitations; because we are well assured, that the fleeting miseries of this life, will work for us, a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

CXXXIX. *All things come alike to all; there is one Event to the RIGHTEOUS and to the WICKED.*

THE wisest of men informs us, that there is no certain distinction made between one man and another, in the distribution of things in this world; but they all have the same fate, especially in public calamities: The righteous perish in battle,

as well as the wicked; the just and pure die in a pestilence, as well as the unjust and depraved: Those that worship God in sincerity and truth, suffer by storms, shipwrecks and inundations, as well as hypocrites. And, on the contrary, a swearer or perjured wretch, prospers as much as he who dreads the awful name of his Maker, and dares not rashly, nor falsely, take it into his mouth. Yet, it sometimes happens, that when a blasphemer makes glaringly free with God's prerogative, and even dares him to punish, that examples have been made, even in this life. But the New Testament clears up this point more perfectly, by telling us, that the wheat and the tares must grow together till the harvest, and then a separation will be made, and every man rewarded according to his works.

Seeing then, that the common contingencies of this life happen promiscuously, as well to the godly, as to the wicked; what great reason have we to bless God for his unexampled goodness and mercy extended to wicked men, by giving them such great opportunities for repentance: For he saith, *That he hath no delight in the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live*; therefore, when a fu-
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ture day of reckoning comes, they can have no cloak for their sins, but must rest satisfied with the doom that their own wicked, and abandoned principles have brought them to.

CXL. *GOD made MAN upright, but they have sought out many Inventions.*

IT is without a doubt, that as God made all other things very good in their several kinds, that he created man in perfect integrity, gave him a clear understanding to judge solidly, and with an honest will inclined to follow his judgment; prescribing to him, no other rule of life than what was just and good. But he, through a desire of being greater than the Almighty intended him, and of enjoying more liberty than his Maker allowed him, raised difficulties and doubts with regard to his duty; racking his mind to invent methods of eluding it; and depraved his nature by following his own opinions, and false reasonings, rather than the will of his beneficent Creator. What excuses do not wicked men make for the follies they commit? Do they not even wrest,

wrest, misinterpret, and trample under their feet the sacred writings, for the better gratification of their foolish passions? And no doubt, but the grand deceiver of mankind is not idle in assisting therein. A proof of which, is clearly demonstrated in *Simon Magus*, wanting to purchase the gift of the Holy Ghost for money; but being reprimanded, and rejected by the apostles, he, instead of repenting of his wicked and inormous attempt, turned apostate, and became the first broacher of several abominable heresies. What extremes of folly and wickedness have not evil men, in all ages, been guilty of? What converts have they not made, to embrace their erroneous and injurious doctrines, purely for the sake of gratifying such passions as the sacred laws of God forbid? It is nothing but our debauched principles, that occasion us to commit such irregularities. Do we think that God endowed us with reason for no other purpose, but to gratify our wicked inclinations?

O shameful man! Let the wonders of thy frame, and the powers of thy mind, teach thee to set bounds to thy actions; to fear thy Creator with awe, and rejoice before him with reverence.

CXLI. *It is better to go to the HOUSE of MOURNING, than to the HOUSE of FEASTING; as Sorrow is better than Laughter; for by the sadness of the Countenance the Heart is made better.*

KING Solomon, by these expressions, does not mean to exclude us from cheerfully enjoying the product of our labour; but recommends us to rejoice, and to do good in our life: Yet he well knew, that nothing stimulates us more powerfully to a religious course, than a frequent remembrance of our own mortality; and therefore, he advises that we ought to embrace all occasions of visiting places, or objects, that remind us of the shortness of human life: And, he also knew, that going to the house of feasting, is the only means of banishing such thoughts totally out of our minds. For, it was customary among the kindred of the eastern nations, to feast and be merry one with another, which occasioned holy *Job* to offer up sacrifices for his children, fearing they had offended God in their mirth, when at their feasts. Are not the same customs, not only kept up, but increased in our days; do not we find at
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most of our public meetings, or feasting, too much drunkenness prevail, which frequently occasions discord, and quarrelling one with another. Therefore, we may well conclude with the wise Preacher, That it is better to go into the house of mourning, than into the house of feasting; for what edification can be received amongst those men who delight so much in intoxication.

Seeing then, that the scriptures were written for our admonition and instruction, it is our duty to embrace every opportunity of putting them in practice; for all the care and vigilance that our frail nature is capable of performing, is still short of our required duty; yet; if we do but strive to improve it, and do not knowingly, nor wilfully neglect it, God, no doubt, will accept our best endeavours.

CXLII. Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy Voice like a Trumpet, and shew my People their Transgressions, and the HOUSE of ISRAEL their Sins.

ALL the prophets sent to the Israelites, were ordered by God, not to be sparing in exhorting, as well as rebuking his people for their flagrant sins. They were to be no respecter of persons, but were to inform their kings, their rulers, and their priests as well as the people, the error of their ways. How does the prophet *Isaiah* rebuke the governors, both of church and state, in his days? The watchmen are blind, says he, they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark, sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs, which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand: They all look to their own way, every one for his gain from his quarter. Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink, and to-morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant. How bold is the prophet *Jeremiah* in rebuking, when he tells them, that they are every one given to covetousness; from

the prophet, even to the priest, every one dealeth falsely. What a serious charge doth God give the prophet *Ezekiel* in doing his duty; yea, he telleth him, that if he warneth not the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood shall be required at his hand. How strenuously doth he rebuke those pastors who were negligent of their duty. Wo be to the shepherds of Israel, says he, that do feed themselves: Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding my flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them. How doth the prophet *Hosea* rebuke the priests in his days: God's people are destroyed, says he, for lack of knowledge; because thou hast rejected knowledge, saith God, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children. What saith the prophet *Micah* to the rulers and priests in his days? The heads of the people, says he, judge for reward, and the

the priests thereof teach for hire; that is, they were not content with the revenue that the law allowed them, but made a corrupt gain of their office, and sold their instructions for money. What saith the prophet *Malachi* unto the priests in his days? If ye will not hear, says he, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the Lord of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings; yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart. Now, as the ministers of the gospel are our shepherds and leaders (a sacred and honourable employment indeed) they ought not to be afraid of exhorting, or rebuking, either publicly or privately, as seemeth to them most likely to reform notorious offenders. For *St. Paul* tells the Romans, that he is not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. He also tells the Corinthians, that though he preach the gospel, he hath nothing to glory of; for necessity is laid upon him; yea, wo is him, if he preach not the gospel. He also charges *Timothy* to be an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Preach the word, says he, be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffer-

ing and doctrine. Take heed unto thyself and doctrine, so shalt thou both save thyself, and those that hear thee.

Would those parents who intend to bring up their children to the priesthood, consider the great trust that is to be reposed in them? And would those, who take that holy garb upon them, consider as seriously, the dignity of their office, and the promise they make when they are ordained deacon? The care of their illiterate flock would so seriously strike their understandings, that it would greatly mortify them, to see their brethren pursuing such flagrant practices as some are guilty of, and excite them to exert themselves in order to reform them. If every minister would strive to preach with energy, and pray with fervency; how greatly must it affect his congregation, when they see him so intent to perform his duty? What a joyful sentence must such a minister hear from his Lord and Master, on the final day of retribution? *Come, thou faithful servant, thou hast been faithful in declaring my gospel, and promoting my cause; come, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.*

CXLIII. *A great Folly in apeing our Superiors, either in Dress, Diet, Actions, or Amusements.*

HOW customary is it for people in general, to imitate their superiors in all actions of life, when they are sensible the pursuit must lead them to utter ruin and beggary. A nobleman sometimes throws away thousands of pounds at a horse race, or a gaming table. What numbers of commonalty follow such examples, till they are undone. The man of fortune and pleasure, caresses himself in his amours, with the ladies of easy virtue, as he can satisfy their demands, for the gratification of his favourite passion. How many do we see, even of the inferior class of mankind, pursuing such follies, till both the purse and constitution are exhausted? What numbers of splendid dishes adorn the tables of great men, who certainly have a right to enjoy the good things of this life? How far is this example copied at all our feasts and entertainments, when even the master of the feast, by striving to equal his superiors, will scarce recover the extravagancy of it in the course of a year. The nobleman can make
use

use of no better liquors, in his evening entertainments, than rum, brandy, or wine. Let us take a survey of those houses which are licensed to sell such liquors, and we shall find them frequently made use of by many, who are scarcely able to pay their reckoning. The governors of the state can make use of no more splendid equipages than coaches: The middling ranks are at their heels, in two horse chaises and whiskies. Our grandees can appear in no better dress than broad cloth, and silk. Let us but attend a play-house or fair, and we shall find the same apparel on the backs of many, who have little more money in their pockets than pay the expence of their recreations. My lord keeps a pack of hounds for his amusement, and diversion. How many unqualified sportsmen give government their two guineas for the pleasure of apeing their superiors. And how many run the risque of pursuing such gentleman-like pleasures, without either the payment of that sum, or qualifications. China ware, tea and sugar, after their introduction into this kingdom, were a long time, only in the possession of the higher ranks of people; but now, are in the possession of those who are even supported by a parish. My lord sues out a bill of divorce

divorce against his lady, because she was detected in adultery with her favourite; purely as a retaliation on his lordship, for the many beautiful dulcineas he has in keeping. The abandoned vulgar cannot be indulged with this toleration of the law for want of abilities; but in order that they may come upon a level with the great, they make no scruple of leaving their wives and children, and fleeing into another country, there to enjoy the pleasure of polygamy. The nobleman seldom or ever appears at church, but employs that day, either in travelling or any other delights, to which his fancy leads him. Religion is deemed a politic invention, as its strictness is incompatible with human nature; because it contradicts those very pleasures he delights to pursue; the clergy are deemed hypocrites, because they preach doctrines that they do not chuse to observe themselves. The peasant shares in all these follies, just as his inclination or fancy leads him; and, instead of attending divine service, you may meet with him, either at the ale-house, or on a jaunt of pleasure, or worldly employment. The people of high rank often refuse the payment of their household expences; yet scruple not paying the money lost at a card table, or
 their

their debts of honour. The vulgar exceed the nobility in this failing, as many of them are not willing to pay any debts at all. *O! tempora, O! mores.*

Let us not ape our superiors, either in their follies or pleasures: let us not follow a multitude to do evil.

CXLIV. *As one STAR differeth from another STAR in GLORY: So, also is the RESURRECTION of the DEAD.*

IT is without a doubt, that in a future state of existence, there will be different degrees of glory conferred, according to the various degrees of piety and virtue in the probationary state. It is these thoughts that incite us to lead a godly life, knowing that we shall be rewarded accordingly. What must it have been, that occasioned all the apostles, and martyrs, patiently to bear the cruelest of tortures, and the cruelest of deaths, but the certainty of their great reward in heaven. They were indeed informed by their Lord and Master, what cruelties they should suffer, and what rewards they might expect for the sake of Christianity:
Yea,

Yea, he told all his followers, that except they were willing to part with all that was dear to them in this world, and even life itself, they could not be his disciples.

Let us then be willing to sacrifice every thing for the promotion of Christianity, if God require it. Let us exert our talents for the benefit of our fellow-creatures. Let us daily strive to admonish and exhort one another; and let us take care that our conversation be innocent, useful and exemplary. For to be employed in endeavouring to bring about the happiness of our fellow-creatures, is not only a god-like exercise, but an imitation of our blessed Redeemer's actions, who was still going about doing good. When the choir of angels pronounced the nativity of Jesus Christ to the shepherds, they proclaimed the good-will of God towards men; and the gospel precepts all tend to inculcate universal benevolence, love and charity one towards another; which commands, he that takes care to improve the most, shall surely be rewarded with a peculiar lustre.

CXLV. *How various are the WORKS of OMNIPOTENCE: in Wisdom hath he made them all; the earth is full of his GOODNESS.*

THE royal Psalmist, after taking a survey of the universe, and all the beautiful productions of the terrestrial globe, broke forth into the above recited extacy. And, indeed, what living mortal can there be, that is not enamoured, or even lost in thought, with the wonderful beauties surrounding every part of it. How doth it pronounce the existence of a God, both in its creation and preservation. When the Supreme Being condescended to reason with *Job*, on the formation and disposition of the several parts of the universe, he was totally confounded, as well by the voice out of the whirlwind, as the questions proposed to him; therefore, with great humility, he confesses that he is a wretched creature, and unworthy to speak to the Majesty of Heaven. How daring have many philosophers been in attempting to assign causes for this or that phenomenon, which, at best, is but conjectural. When vain man attempts to pry into the hidden mysteries of God, which were never

never intended to be revealed to him, he undoubtedly is liable to incur the Almighty's displeasure; for secret things belong only unto God.

Was it possible then, that we could take a survey of all the creatures that God hath blessed this terrestrial globe with, we should not only be filled with rapture, but wonder and astonishment also. What exalted notions must we likewise entertain of the magnificency of the Godhead, who created these celestial orbs that we are spectators of; but, indeed, what little do we see of this noble creation, whose limits are only a span; or, as a small speck on this globe; yet, we see sufficient to cry out with the holy Psalmist; *O Lord! how wonderful are thy works, in wisdom thou hast made them all.*

CXLVI. *Before I was troubled, I went wrong, but now have I kept thy Commandments.*

KING *David*, in these words confesses, that before he was acquainted with afflictions, he committed many errors; but, since he had felt God's loving correction,

he had been more observable of his word: Nay, he owns that it was good for him to have been afflicted, that he might learn his statutes. It is impossible to enjoy life, without feeling the inconveniences that attend it; yet, if we would set enjoyments against misfortunes, we would find very great reason to be thankful, that we have received so much good, as is sufficient to alleviate the evil. The afflictions of this life cannot be very great, as they have only power over the body; but the riches of a better life, are out of their reach. Let us consider what afflictions our blessed Redeemer suffered while on earth, as well as all the apostles and martyrs, purely for their innocency. How ought this to shame us, when we are sensible that our sufferings are brought on by our own follies, or intended by our heavenly Father, to reform our principles, and teach us wisdom. Were we to run smoothly through life, without any miscarriages, (which is impossible) we should grow insolent and vain, the thoughts of futurity would seldom enter into our heads; and, though we might not fall into gross sins, we should not, perhaps, take due care to improve in virtue.

Let

Let us then observe the resolutions of afflicted *Job*, and they will assist us to bear patiently, the natural troubles of human life. *Though he slay me, says he, yet will I trust in him : Till I die I will not remove my integrity from me : My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go : My heart shall not reproach me so long as I live. O happy, happy, happy example ! Let it be copied after to the utmost of our abilities ?*

CXLVII. *Can the ÆTHIOPIAN change his SKIN, or the LEOPARD his SPOTS ? So may those that are accustomed to do Good, do Evil.*

FROM these words we learn, that it is difficult to make any alteration in our principles, after we arrive at manhood. It then becomes all parents, to teach their children the ways of godliness in their youth, and when they become old, they will not depart from it. I can give no better instructions for this serious charge, than the pious *Mr. Harvey* hath done, which I beg leave to transcribe. “ Let the mind be put under “ the nurture and admonition of the Lord :
Let

“ Let a holy discipline clear the soil : Let
 “ sacred instructions sow it with the best
 “ seed : Let skill and vigilance dress the
 “ rising shoots : direct the young ideas
 “ how to spread ; the wayward passions how
 “ to move :—Then, what a different state
 “ of the inner man will quickly take place !
 “ Charity will breathe her sweets, and hope
 “ expand her blossoms ; the personal vir-
 “ tues display their graces, and the social
 “ ones their fruits ; the sentiments become
 “ generous ; the carriage endearing ; the
 “ life honourable and useful.

“ O ! that governors of families, and
 “ masters of schools, would watch with a
 “ conscientious solicitude, over the morals
 “ of their tender charge ! what pity it is,
 “ that the advancing generation should lose
 “ these invaluable endowments, through
 “ any supineness in their instructions.” Let
 it be observed then, that it is not making
 children repeat their catechism, that will be
 of much service, except they endeavour to
 make them understand it ; explaining the
 scriptures, and putting them in mind of the
 duties which arise from every point of doc-
 trine, is the grand duty required. If one
 day in the week was set apart, in all public
 schools, for the improvement of religious
 principles,

principles, how soon would the rising generation be instructed in their duty to God, themselves, and their fellow-creatures: For, all that pains we take in books or arts, which treat of things remote from the use of life, is but a busy idleness.

CXLVIII. *The AIM of all our ACTIONS, should be to know, what are the great ENDS for which we live.*

IN a former essay on *Self-knowledge*, I hinted that wisdom and learning should be more diligently sought for, than riches or honour. Now, this copious *Self-knowledge*, should be more diligently searched into, than perhaps our inclinations would lead us to do; or more than I can decently display in either one or two essays, as I intend to adhere to the brevity I purposed. Our great moralist, Mr. *Pope*, says, That all our knowledge is to know ourselves. Let us then ask ourselves, What is the ultimate scope we drive at; whether we are governed by any fixed principles or not, or by such purposes as we are ashamed to own. If our views center in the world we are in, we are every

every day more and more departing from our happiness; for, if our main care be to appear great in the eyes of men, or in any enjoyment of earthly pleasures, we shall expose ourselves to the pain of perpetual disappointments and miseries: But, if our chief care is to please our Creator, by observing his precepts, we are laying up for ourselves such a fund of lasting and solid satisfaction, as shall not only appear great in the eye of God, but in the eyes of all good men.

Let then this principle be our whole study and delight; let us be resolved to maintain our integrity, both in public and private; let us but recollect our rambling thoughts, turn them upon ourselves, and watch the motions of our hearts; for we all know as much as is sufficient for our happiness, if we rightly cultivate that knowledge. By this steady pursuit, we shall always live, as we dare to die.

CXLIX. *The Heavens shall pass away with a great Noise, and the Elements melt with Feruent Heat; the Earth also, and the Works that are therein, shall be burnt up.*

OUR apostle, St. Peter tells us, that this world is condemned to flames and dissolution, and that there will be a new world made, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Seeing then, says he, that these things shall come to pass, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation, who expect to live in this new world? Should not these truths then, teach us to set our affections on such treasures as we may enjoy everlastingly? What are busy mortals bustling so much about here? I fear, for riches, which we evidently see, and know, have no lasting duration; neither will they be of any avail to our happiness, except we make it our whole study to do good with them; and, who knows whether thousands of pounds, or hundreds, will be more beneficial to our heirs. It is no matter whether we are rich or poor, princes or peasants, neither does it signify what become of our wealth, when we are gone. The frugal person may leave it to one that will spend all that he hath acquired;

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quired ; and the prodigal person may have a son, that will see into the follies of his father.

As then, the things of this world are not in our power to preserve, they will come and go without our permission ; for riches take to themselves wings, and flee away, like an eagle, towards heaven. Let us then seriously observe, how many cautions are contained in the gospel precepts, on the uncertainty thereof. Let us keep a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man ; then, contentment will keep us in such a mein, as shall make us rest satisfied under the inevitable evils of human life. Thus, enjoying a meek and humble temper, we shall act with such care and diligence, that when this period shall arrive, we may be found worthy of a place in the new Heavenly Jerusalem.

CL. *A great Benefit accruing to the Mind,
in the Formation of simple Pleasures.*

MAN being naturally active, will have constant employment in prosecuting projects, as well as amusements, either beneficial

neficial or detrimental to his welfare. Yet if any should choofe to deviate, and lead an inactive life, he will foon find himfelf poffeffed of neither a foud mind nor a foud body. Do not we fee youths, before their principles are vitiated, eager in the purfuit of fimple pleafures. How fweet is it in old age, to rehearfe the innocent amufements of youth! How happily then fhould we enjoy life, when we advance to riper years, if we could but fix our minds on innocent amufements, or fimple pleafures. Thofe of the rural kind are above all others to be preferred; as a garden, a fifhing rod, a dog and a gun. The two laft, gentlemen have engroffed; but the garden, which is the moft entertaining, may be occupied by all ranks, either in town or country, the metropolis excepted. Yet, there are fo many delightful walks and amufements, in, and about that city, as in fome meafure to compensate for the deficiency. The fuperintendence then, of a garden would take up our leifure hours in a moft delightful manner, as Nature is renewing her beautiful foilage continually. There is no end of her diverfities, as fhe is infinite in her productions. Let us but take a furvey of the indefatigable ants and bees, and they will

teach us industry and activity. But, what delights must husbandmen enjoy, who are continually breathing the purest air, among the songsters of the sky, at their plow, their scythe or their sickle: How ruddy their complexions, how innocent their actions, and how sweet their repose! What health and happiness might our nobility enjoy, if they would but spend more of their time, at their beautiful villas.

Let us then all be content in the stations of life allotted us. Let us take care that we adopt such innocent amusements in youth, as may not only tend to the benefit of our health, but our future happiness. Then, the reflection of our actions will be sweet, as they will not recoil on us in old age, when perhaps it may be out of our power to make any atonement for our misconduct.

CLI. *All the Felicity of a Man, as well present as to come, dependeth on the Soul.*

THE meanest capacity knows, that man is composed of two parts, a body and a soul: The former is only the husk, or shell of the latter. The body was formed from

from the dust of the earth, therefore liable to pain, diseases and death: The soul is the organ and instrument of God, whereby he worketh in us, and lifteth us up to the contemplation of his divine power and nature. It is very surprizing, that so much care, labour and toil, should be taken to maintain this earthly part, *the body*, whose short duration here, is only a shadow, in comparison of eternity; and so little taken for the welfare of the spiritual part, *the soul*, which is eternal. As the soul then never dies; why do we not more earnestly strive to make it happy, both here and hereafter? Does not the offender know how his conscience pricks him, when he is doing amiss? There is no peace of mind, saith our God, to the wicked. The delights of the soul, should be to know her Maker, to consider the works of Heaven, and to know her own state and being. The pleasures of the mind far excelleth the pleasures of the body; the thoughts of the former will end in happiness, but those of the latter in eternal misery. The sacred volumes having made happiness very attainable; it can be nothing but our own depravity, that makes us thirst after the one, more than the other.

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Let a strict guard then be set over all our thoughts and actions, and our merciful God will assist us in doing our duty, if we do but strive to exert ourselves. Who is like unto him in glory? Justice and mercy wait before his throne: Who in power shall contend with him? He it is, O man! that created thee; thy station on earth was fixed by his appointment: The powers of thy mind are the gifts of his goodness; the wonders of thy frame, are the work of his hand. Fear then the Lord all the days of thy life, and walk in the paths which he hath shewn thee. Let prudence admonish thee; let temperance restrain; let justice conduct; benevolence warm thy heart, and gratitude to Heaven inspire thee with devotion. These shall give thee happiness in thy present state, and in the next, eternal felicity in the mansions of God, where thy re-united body and soul shall dwell with the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to all eternity.

CLII. *Debauched Love and Desire cured,
and a discreet PARTNER recommended.*

BEWARE, my son, of the allurements of wantonness, and let not the harlot tempt thee to excess in her delights. Let not thine heart incline to her ways; go not astray in her paths; for she hath cast down many wounded, yea, many strong men have been slain by her. Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death. Use not much the company of a woman singer, lest thou be taken by her attempts. Love is a fading pleasure, mixed with bitter passions, and a misery temper'd with a few momentary delights. Give not thy strength then to harlots, neither be thou partaker with the adulterers. The first conjunction of man's society, was man and wife; *For that cause shall a man leave father and mother and cleave unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.* Take unto thyself then a partner, but be discreet in thy choice; for on it will depend thy future happiness. Chuse her not for her outward person, but inward perfections; for a virtuous woman rejoiceth her husband, and he shall fulfil the years of his life in peace. See that thou reprove
her

her faults with gentleness, and exact not her obedience with rigour. Consider the delicacy of her frame, and be not severe to her weakness; but remember thine own imperfections. Oppose not her inclinations, without sufficient reason, but make her the companion of thy pleasures, so thou mayest trust thy secrets in her breast, and shalt not be deceived. Be faithful to the partner of thy bed, and go not after other women, *for whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.* Comfort her in sickness and afflictions, and strive to alleviate her grief with thy love. Then thou mayest expect that thy wife will endear herself to thee, by a reasonable submission and obedience, according as God hath commanded her. She will also guard her expressions, with a becoming decency; for all her answers will be mildness and truth. She will be clothed with neatness, and fed with temperance. She will be provident for her family, and her servants will be made obedient without rigour: For every wise woman buildeth her house, but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands. She will not be puffed up in prosperity, neither dejected in adversity. She will alleviate her husband's misfortunes, and troubles, by the sweetness of her temper, and
her

her children will be taught their duty to God, their parents, and their fellow-creatures. Happy is the man that hath made her his wife, happy the child that shall call her mother : For whoso findeth such a wife, findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the Lord.

CLIII. *Fasting and Prayer, the only Support under public Calamities.*

WHEN it pleaseth the Supreme Being to punish individuals, or nations, for their enormous and flagrant offences, it behoveth us all to flee to him for succour, by prayer and fasting. Is it not as right for our heavenly Father to correct us, as for an earthly father to correct his child ? Yea, he tells us, that whom he loveth he doth correct. It would be well, if those terrible corrections were more seriously laid to heart. Let us not then, in a mourning dress, go to church in hypocritical formality ; but let us be resolved to amend our ways and our doings, and bring forth fruits meet for repentance. Let us, every one, correct our own frailties ; for, great and public calamities,

ties, are undoubtedly sent for great and public offences; yet, all human means must be exerted, as well as prayer to God. What serious, and tremendous afflictions did this nation suffer the last century? In the year of our Lord 1640, forty thousand Protestants were massacred in *Ireland*. In the year 1665, there died sixty eight thousand of the plague in London; so that grass grew in the streets, and in the Royal Exchange; besides very great numbers that died in the country. And, in the next year following, before the inhabitants of London were well settled in their habitations, a great fire happened in the metropolis, which burnt down thirteen thousand two hundred houses. Would not such judgments as these, rouse the most hardened wretches? They could not help thinking, but that God was going to destroy that most opulent city. Yet, shocking to tell, there were not wanting men wicked enough to steal their neighbour's property, while both the dismal catastrophes raged in the city, though many lost their lives in the attempt. In the year of our Lord 1703, there was one of the most violent storms in England ever remembered, both by land and sea. The royal navy lost four third rate ships, four fourth rates,

two

two bomb vessels, one advice boat, and one store ship. Loss of men on board, one thousand six hundred: Guns, five hundred and twenty-four; but merchant ships and lives could not be calculated. One hundred and twenty-three people were killed by the unroofing of houses, and chimnies falling. People drowned in the River Thames, and Severn, were calculated at eight thousand. Eight hundred houses blown down, one hundred churches uncovered, seven steeples totally blown down, four hundred wind-mills were burnt and blown down. The damages done on the banks of the Severn, were calculated at above two hundred thousand pounds. Fifteen thousand sheep were drowned in one level. Stacks of corn and hay all blown down, or considerably damaged. Hundreds of thousands of trees blown down, all over the kingdom. The garden walls on every side of the city, were laid flat on the ground. It would make a small volume to rehearse all the losses sustained. Many people were of opinion, that the damage done by the tempest, far exceeded that done by the fire in 1666. I cannot help renewing to our minds, the late dreadful earthquake at Lisbon; as well as two in London, which did not much

damage; happy, that we were not chastised like our neighbours. Let us draw some reflections from those tremendous visitations. What dismal desolations did the plague make, what strangeness and terror! Men, in their best age and vigour falling by multitudes, dead in the streets and highways, hardly having time to say, *Lord have mercy upon us*. Crouds of noisome carcases lying unburied, and rotting above ground, for want of hands to remove them. Great towns and cities almost depopulated; rich, and well inhabited provinces, in a short time made destitute of inhabitants, and almost turned into a desert. The parish of Aldgate, London, buried in one pit or grave; one thousand one hundred and fourteen bodies thrown in like dogs; some in sheets, some in rugs, and others almost naked. O! tremendous sight! how unspeakable would our terror and concern have been, had we been eye-witnesses thereof.

Let us then repent of our sins, and turn unto the Lord with all our hearts, lest our iniquities be our own ruin.

CLIV. PUNISHMENTS in this WORLD.

A FRUITFUL land maketh he barren, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein; and *Eli's* house was cut off for its wickedness; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not. It has been the Almighty's care, to protect his servants in all ages and countries, on the face of the earth, from the creation of the world to this period. And it has also been his unerring wisdom, to punish sinners, by overthrowing empires, kingdoms, and cities, as well as individuals, who have trampled under their feet his divine commands; for the wicked flee when no man pursueth; but the righteous are bold as a lion. Where is the grandeur of *Egypt*, which was the support of *Jacob's* seed upwards of four hundred years? And where is *Judea*? the habitation of the once favourite people of God; a land flowing with milk and honey, called the glory of all lands; but now almost a desolate wilderness. Where are *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*? where are the famous cities of *Nineveh* and *Babylon*? and where is ancient *Rome*? who once gave laws to the whole earth? Was it not for their great wickednesses

wickednesses that they were destroyed? yet we find, that while they trusted in God, and justice and equity were observed, they continued at their summit of glory.

Let, my children, these examples of God's wrath awaken us; and let us not think within ourselves, that this, or any other nation, is perhaps better than the before-mentioned; for, except we repent, we shall all likewise perish. Let the word of God be our guide; justice and mercy our conductors; then we may rest assured that the prosperity of states, as well as individuals, will still be protected by the Almighty Giver of all good things, so long as they put their trust in him.

CLV. *I will arise and go to my FATHER, and will say unto Him, FATHER, I have sinned against HEAVEN, and before THEE, and am no more worthy to be called thy SON.*

THESE are ~~an~~ the words of the prodigal son in the gospel, after he had spent the patrimony his father bestowed on him in riotous living; thus being reduced to great want and misery, it opened his eyes, and

and made him sensible of his follies, which occasioned him to utter the above expressions. No sooner had his repentance, and future obedience, been pronounced to his kind and compassionate father, but he was received again into favour, with the greatest joy and satisfaction.

From this parable is plainly shewn, that all penitent sinners will be admitted into favour again with God, on their hearty and sincere repentance. What felicity and joy then, must every sincere penitent feel on his conversion? And what great compassion and condescension is this in our gracious God, to offer us such acceptable terms? O! the mercy and goodness of our blessed Redeemer! No exceptions with him; Jews and Gentiles, publicans and harlots, are welcome to partake of bliss, if they will but forsake their follies and repent. Let us then, all of us, examine ourselves, and turn from our wicked ways, lest our iniquities be our own ruin.

CLVI. *REPENTANCE and OBEDIENCE.*

BEFORE we can expect the favour of Almighty God, we must not only repent of all our transgressions, but we must resolve to lead a new life, by a strict obedience to his holy commands. For our blessed Redeemer tells us, That except we be born again, we cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.

My dear children, let us not deceive ourselves, by expecting that a death-bed repentance is sufficient to atone for a whole life spent in iniquity, and disobedience to the laws of God ; or think that it will be time enough to repent in old age, after the follies of youth are in some measure abated. —How do we know that we shall have the opportunity of doing either the one or the other ? or indeed, even of to-morrow. Let repentance be begun with to-day, and persevered in to-morrow. How many instances have we seen of people resolving to lead a new life when any sickness or violent malady beset them ; but as soon as health was restored, so soon were their resolutions forgotten. Nay, it is not in the power of a deceased brother, should he appear to us again,

again, after death, to bring us from an evil course of life, except we will tread in the gospel steps in the early part thereof.

Let, my children, this advice sink deep into your minds ; *for from this very moment depends eternity.* Let repentance be begun with immediately ; and let your resolutions be steady and unalterable ; for I am sensible, the greatest *Epicurean* can find no real satisfaction in his effeminacy or voluptuous pleasures. What madness will not that man think himself guilty of, when, on his death-bed, he sees clearly, that he has forfeited eternal happiness, for a few moments of insignificant pleasure ?

CLVII. On DEATH.

DEATH, being the most terrible of all terrible things, ought to take up the attention of mankind far more than it seemingly does ; for, as we are sent here purposely to improve the talents given us, it becomes us to be exceedingly diligent what use we make of them ; for on that depends our future happiness or misery. And, as the approach of death is often sudden and

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uncertain,

uncertain, we ought never to be without oil in our lamps, ready to meet the bridegroom should he come at midnight. We are apt to complain that life is short, yet how few do we find making proper use of that short period. We are all naturally desirous of life, yet how frequently do we shorten it by our intemperance and follies; We see people dying daily, yet regardless of death ourselves.

Let us reflect then, how dreadful the approach of it must be to the wicked; but how rejoicing to the godly! as it frees them from this sinful world, and carries them into an everlasting state of bliss and happiness.

In order then to avoid the actions of the former, and embrace those of the latter, we must fear God and keep his commandments, (for this is the whole duty of man) and then we shall be ready to welcome our deliverer, at any period of life.

CLVIII. REWARDS *and* PUNISHMENTS
in a FUTURE STATE.

REWARDS and Punishments being the sure attendants on the good and bad actions of this life, how natural ought it to be, for all prudent people, seriously to weigh and consider them? How careful would we be to address a man whom we expected a favour from, yet how careless are we in paying our addresses to Him who is continually pouring his blessings upon us here, and who will also reward and punish hereafter! —Solomon says, “Because sentence against an evil work is not speedily executed, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.” This is too much the case with Christians, though they know, from a far better author than Solomon, that God does not always execute rewards and punishments in this life, but will certainly do it in that which is to come. This should remind us then of that awful period.

Let us, my children, not defer repentance one moment; but exert all our might and power to tread in the gospel steps; then, when this frail and transitory life is ended, we shall be made welcome guests with the

saints in light, and enjoy that happiness to all eternity.

CLIX. *The* GREAT DAY, *or* DAY
of JUDGMENT.

THE Day of Judgment, which is the final retribution of all our actions done in this world, is so plainly described in the New Testament, and its approach so uncertain, that we are frequently commanded to watch, as we know not in what hour of the night our Lord may come. Christians are not at a loss how to prepare themselves for that great and momentous event. Yet, how unthinking, careless, and heedless are they of its approach! Had it not been one of the weightiest matters in the New Testament, our Saviour and his apostles would not have so frequently warned us thereof. For what is of greater consequence than everlasting happiness or misery! the parable of *Dives* and *Lazarus* is a sufficient proof thereof; which also shews that it is the cares, as well as the pleasures of this world, that we think after, and which frustrate our happiness.—For we cannot serve *God* and *Mammon*.

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O, my dear children, let us act like Christians, and shake off these earthly pleasures we have so long pursued. And, let us set our affections on things above, and not on things below; knowing assuredly that what we sow, we must reap; for the Lord our God is just, as well as merciful; and not a respecter of persons. So that if we will set no value on everlasting happiness, we must expect to be totally excluded from it.

CLX. *HEAVEN, or a State of BLISS
and HAPPINESS.*

HEAVEN, the residence of all heavenly beings, is promised to man, on condition of his obedience to the laws of his Maker; but is so much out of the reach of human understanding, that it is impossible to describe its delights and pleasures. We therefore ought seriously to study, and lay to heart, this great attainment of everlasting bliss and happiness. Yet how little do we think about it! though it ought to be the sole object and aim of all ranks of people. It is our grovelling principles that are so glued to our earthly habitations, that prevent

vent us setting our affections on things above, though one would think (seeing this life is so full of disappointments and troubles) that we should strive to wean ourselves more from it. For we have daily proof of its uncertainty, as also the enjoyment of all earthly pleasures. Yet so frail are our understandings, that without God's assistance we are not able to do any thing of ourselves.

Let us, my dear children, frequently pray to God for his holy spirit to direct and instruct us; and let us continually be on our guard, to do our duty with all diligence and perseverance. Then we may rest satisfied, That after this mortal life is ended, we shall through the mediation of our blessed Redeemer, hear that welcome sentence pronounced by him, of "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

CLXI. HELL, *or a State of* MISERY
and TORMENT.

HELL being the place wherein the devil and wicked souls are confined, cannot be expressed without horror. It is
evident

evident that the Supreme God of Heaven and Earth, hath implanted in the mind of every man the knowledge of good and evil, and that *rewards* and *punishments* must follow their contents. But how evident is it to the professors of Christianity, where its torments are emphatically described!—How ought then the dreadful denunciation of these torments to affect us! Yet, by the flagrant practices frequently pursued, it would seem, as if they were either totally forgotten, or misbelieved by some. But let not the unthinking deceivers of themselves be forgetful, that neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

In order, my beloved children, that we may escape eternal punishment, let us constantly request the Almighty's assistance, to enable us to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil. For, without it, our endeavours are too weak.—And let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall. For there hath no temptation befallen one, but what may another. Yet, if the fear of God, and the prospect of
future

future happiness, will not stimulate us to lead a religious course of life, we must expect, at the end of time, to hear our final sentence pronounced by the blessed Son of God, of "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

CLXII. *Hearken unto your FATHER that begat you, hear COUNSEL, and receive INSTRUCTION, that ye may be wise at your LATTER END.*

I CANNOT conclude these essays, my dear children, without seriously requesting you to consider their contents. In this Edition I have offered a number of virtues to sale; have uncovered many rocks, on which numbers have been cast away; and exposed many quick-sands to view, which the unwary have plunged into, in a more ample manner than in the two preceding ones. Let me intreat you to buy the virtues without money, and without price; and let me beg of you, to guide your vessel as clear of the rocks and quick-sands as you are able: For youth being naturally prone
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to dissipation and folly, ought frequently to be reminded of their duty. How cautious then ought you to be, to shun those numerous temptations that frequently surround you ! Consider how affecting it must be to parents, when they hear of any disasters that befall their children, more particularly, when brought on by their own follies. Do but reflect what your parents have done for you; how they have nursed you in infancy, fed and clothed you ; given you education sufficient for your welfare, and withheld no good thing from you, that was in their power to bestow. What then is your duty, but to hear their instructions ? Be ye happy, and they are happy ; and do not, by your misconduct, bring your aged parents to the grave before their time. Strive to get your bread with honesty, care, and industry ; and let the word of God be your chief study and delight. Be obedient to the laws of the land ; let justice and mercy be tempered together ; but still lean to the side of the latter ; and forgive an injury rather than revenge one. Let temperance, self-denial, and a moderate use of bodily refreshments, be constantly adhered to ; knowing, and daily seeing, that libertines never live out half their days ; consider seriously that every

precept of Christianity is founded on the best principles, for the welfare of both body and soul; for the all-wise and merciful God hath declared, That he hath no delight in the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness, and live.

Let no tauntings, scoffings derisions, irony, buffoonery, nor obscene discourse proceed out of your mouth; for though the man may think himself a wit, that hath his quiver full of these, yet let him consider, that he must be answerable for his expressions, as well as actions. These things, seriously laid to heart, will secure you peace of mind here, as well as happiness hereafter. For, were but the laws of God as discreetly obeyed, as they are strictly enjoined, this earth might again be made a paradise of pleasure. But should you reject the wholesome advice these essays contain, and are determined to walk in the ways of your heart, and in the sight of your eyes; assuredly, be informed, that God will bring you into judgment; for nothing can hide our works from his All-seeing eye; nor shall any, not even the most minute, be forgotten. For they that have done good, shall go into life everlasting, and they that have done evil, into everlasting fire. Let me finally entreat you

you to "watch then, and be ready, for in such an hour as you think not, the Son of man cometh."

CLXIII. *The* PENITENT PRODIGAL'S
HYMN, *on renouncing his Errors.*

[SEE THE FRONTISPIECE.]

O-Praise the Lord of heav'n and earth,
Let all extol his fame;
For he alone gave all things birth,
Then praised be his name.

Let all the earth their homage pay
To God, their only Lord;
And let us all incessant pray
To him with one accord.

Let all the angels him adore,
And all the powers above;
For he is God for evermore,
And endless is his love.

He pluck'd me from the mire and clay,
When founder'd deep indeed,
When I would not my God obey,
Or of his word take heed.

Though I was struck with rev'rend awe,
 By father's serious care ;
 Yet till my God did mercy shew,
 My soul was in despair.

Then on the Lord, I'll always call,
 He only can defend ;
 His blessings he extends to all
 That on his power depend.

CLXIV. *A few Plain and Easy RULES,
 requisite to be observed, for the Attainment
 of LONGEVITY.*

LET the abilities of both body and mind
 be chearfully exerted, according to
 the gifts of nature, in all the stations of life
 we pursue ; for chearfulness raises the spi-
 rits, and gives a brisk circulation to the blood.

AIR, being the most necessary thing to-
 wards the subsistence of health, ought chief-
 ly to be studied ; for so necessary is it to
 man, that though he might live three or
 four days without meat or drink, yet were
 he deprived of air, he could but subsist a
 very short time. The Israelites were strict-
 ly forbidden by the Almighty, to void
 things

things which defiled the air ; for the purer the air we breathe, the more it contributes to health. Therefore, cleanliness in our streets, houses, and apparel, should be particularly regarded.

Let exercise, and temperance in eating and drinking, be particularly studied ; as they are the principal preservatives of health ; every man's constitution will soon inform him what is agreeable or detrimental to it. The excessive folly of drinking, I fear, carries more to the grave than the sword. Let no more sleep be indulged, than is reasonably sufficient for the support of our bodies ; and let that be taken in the night, and not in the day ; as far as is consistent with our reasonable callings.

Let no indulgences of warm cloathing be allowed youth, it makes them weak and effeminate ; and let all tight bandages, and ligaments in dress be rejected, as they obstruct the circulation of the blood.

Let the passions be particularly regarded, namely, anger, fear, grief, love, and melancholy.

Anger ought not to be encouraged too much, as nothing tends more to the health of the body than a tranquil mind.

Fear

Fear is dangerous ; for it depresses our spirits, and increases our disorders. The constant dread of future evils, dwelling much on the mind, has been often the occasion of unnatural and untimely deaths.

Grief is more dangerous than fear ; for, when fixed, it preys upon the spirits, and wastes the constitution. As we are naturally born to troubles, we ought never to sink under them. Let it be conquered then, at its first approaches ; lest, afterwards all attempts be found fruitless.

Love, being the strongest of all the passions, we ought always to be on our guard to curb its violence ; for, as it is not suddenly encouraged, therefore it may be more easily conquered. We ought never to place our affections on any object, till we have seriously considered, whether the end can be obtained or not ; if that could be the case, (as it ought) we should act with such indifference as never to be ruffled by a disappointment.

Melancholy disorders are frequently brought on by sudden frights, intense thought, excessive love, solitude, watchings, fear, hypochondriac or hysteric disorders. Let then the cause be seriously considered from whence the malady sprung ; and if the
afflicted

afflicted patient will only be persuaded to shake off the weak and timid passion, and adopt the very opposite maxims, the disorder would soon be banished.

Religious melancholy is not so readily cured. What a pity it is that men should harbour such dismal and gloomy thoughts of religion! The Christian religion teaches no such austerities; therefore, no body ought to despond; for should their sins be as red as scarlet, they may be made white as snow by repentance.

The customary evacuations of the body should not be neglected; namely, those by stool, urine, and perspiration. Regular stools should be promoted if possible, either by diet or alterative medicines; but the former the better. Though no certain rule can be laid down; for the same constitution will vary, according to regimen, diet, or exercise. Every prudent man will soon be able to judge what sort of food is most agreeable to his constitution, as well as liquids.

Too long a retention of urine is dangerous, therefore the calls of nature ought never to be postponed.

Perspiration ought never to be obstructed, but encouraged; a sudden transition
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from heat to cold is dangerous, or cold liquor drunk when hot is equally dangerous, except the same exercise be pursued, till the liquor be warmed on the stomach. The more we inure our bodies to the open air, the less liable we are to catch colds, or stop perspiration. Wet cloaths; damp rooms, or beds, are dangerous; which have frequently occasioned violent disorders, or death.

In short, if we have any regard for longevity, our blood and juices ought to be kept in a regular and due degree of fluidity. For nothing will add thereto more, than subduing our passions, and leading a sober and discreet life. For *Solomon* tells us, that the fear of the Lord prolongeth days; but the years of the wicked shall be shortened. The *Son of Sirach* also informs us, That the fear of the Lord maketh a merry heart, and giveth joy and gladness, and a long life. And *St. Paul* says, That godliness is profitable unto all; having the promise of this life, and of that which is to come.



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